



Diocese of El Paso

Catholic Pastoral Center

June 24, 2020

Office of the Bishop

Ricardo Samaniego, County Judge
500 East San Antonio
El Paso, Texas 79901

Carlos Leon, County Commissioner, Precinct 1
500 East San Antonio
El Paso, Texas 79901

David Stout, County Commissioner, Precinct 2
500 East San Antonio
El Paso, Texas 79901

Vince Perez, County Commissioner, Precinct 3
500 East San Antonio
El Paso, Texas 79901

Carl Robinson, County Commissioner, Precinct 4
500 East San Antonio
El Paso, Texas 79901

Honorable Judge and Commissioners:

I am pleased that El Paso County is working to establish two new national historic districts that will commemorate and promote the rich history of our urban core: one in Downtown and one in Segundo Barrio. However, it is with great concern that I am following your efforts to establish the boundary between these two proposed districts.

Segundo Barrio was established circa 1885, only a dozen years after the City of El Paso was incorporated, and since that time has been clearly defined by boundaries that are both physical and cultural. It is a place where countless immigrants first entered the United States, especially from Mexico; and during the Mexican Revolution, many thousands crossed the bridge from Ciudad Juárez, a few blocks south of Sacred Heart Church, in order to seek refuge, flee religious persecution and start a new life.

Since 1893, Sacred Heart Church, established on south Oregon Street between 4th Avenue and Father Rahm, by Fr. Carlos Pinto, is the anchor of the neighborhood, addressing the spiritual and many social needs of the community and providing them with numerous ministries for this purpose. In addition, its Jesuit priests have traditionally served as voices for justice, charity and reconciliation. Due to its long history, many in the city still connect with Sacred Heart.

Letter to County Judge and Commissioners
June 24, 2020
Page Two

When similar threats to the integrity and history of the Segundo Barrio arose in 2006, my predecessor, Bishop Armando Ochoa together with the Fr. John Stowe, then Vicar General (now bishop of Lexington, KY), and Fr. Rafael Garcia, SJ, at the time pastor, drafted a letter to the Mayor and City Council regarding major concerns that would have affected the people and the barrio.

The current plan to exclude Sacred Heart Church along with many other historic buildings from the proposed Segundo Barrio National Historic District, transferring them to the downtown historic district would be a grave mistake as has been expressed by so many in the community. It would arbitrarily divide this historic neighborhood of immigrant families. One suspects that there are powerful business interests at play, as Father Rafael Garcia suggested in his letter to you as well as in his public comment on Monday.

Undoubtedly, the Segundo Barrio needs help and improvements. But plans that are not inclusive, but rather drive out the more vulnerable people in the name of an exclusive progress is not in the interest of the Common Good.

I urge you to reject the so-called "Option 2", which divides Segundo and instead support "Option 3", which would establish a national historic district in Segundo Barrio that conforms closely to the Second Ward's historic borders and includes Sacred Heart Church and the surrounding neighborhood in its entirety.

The people who reside there – as well as many others with connections to the barrio -- deserve an undivided district that fully respects their unique history and culture and the Diocese of El Paso proudly and firmly stands with them.

Respectfully,



Bishop Mark J. Seitz, DD
Bishop of El Paso

EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

603 W. Yandell
El Paso, Texas 79902
(915) 533-3603

epchs@elpasohistory.com



June 25, 2020

Dear County of El Paso, Texas Commissioners Court:

The El Paso County Historical Society (EPCHS) submits this letter in opposition to the boundaries for the Segundo Barrio National Historic District approved by the Court on June 15, 2020.

Founded in 1954, EPCHS is one of the oldest historical societies in Texas. Our leadership consists of academically trained historians, members of the business community, and active participants in the civic culture of El Paso.

We believe that the boundaries of the proposed national historic district, as approved on June 15, 2020, are inadequate and fail to completely represent Segundo Barrio. This neighborhood, dating back to at least 1885, is one of El Paso's oldest communities. It has served as a bedrock for Mexican American residents for generations. To walk along its streets today is to step into an area distinct from any other neighborhood or business district in El Paso. Placing the neighborhood in two separate national historical districts is not only historically inaccurate but raises concerns as to the reasons behind such a move.

As the City of El Paso wrote in 2012, "Segundo Barrio is not Downtown... the strategies for addressing this historic community should be different from strategies for the Downtown. As investment and revitalization of the Downtown occurs, the large-scale development of the Downtown need not bleed over into Segundo Barrio. Preservation and infill should be the focus of strategies for the neighborhood in order to enhance the community, without pricing the present inhabitants out of the market" (City of El Paso, Texas, Comprehensive Plan 2012, Vol. 1, pg. 2.18).

We believe that Option 3, dated June 15, 2020, or the compromise plan presented by Commissioner David Stout on June 22, 2020, best reflect the historical boundaries of Segundo Barrio. The southern boundary of the proposed Downtown National Historic District should be Paisano Street. We also believe that the Court should value the expertise of local experts and, most importantly, the residents of the neighborhood, many who do not agree with the boundary voted upon on June 15, 2020. Residents of the neighborhood are in a position to understand its unique character more than anyone. As such, we respectfully ask that Commissioners Court reconsider its position.

Please contact us at 915-329-3702 or at epchs@elpasohistory.com if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Melissa Hutson, President
El Paso County Historical Society



2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

ROMAN MCALLEN
PRESIDENT
HOUSTON

ROBERT BLUTHARDT
VICE-PRESIDENT
SAN ANGELO

CHARLENE ORR
VICE-PRESIDENT
KAUFMAN

KATHERINE SEALE
VICE-PRESIDENT
DALLAS

RON SIEBLER
TREASURER
DALLAS

SUE MORRIS LAZARA
SECRETARY
LINDEN

DIRECTORS

ANDREA BAREFIELD
WACO

BARBARA BRANNON
SPUR

ANTHONY CROSBY
MARSHALL

MAX GROSSMAN
EL PASO

AUGUST HARRIS
AUSTIN

DIXIE HOOVER
MEXIA

CHARLES JOHN
SAN ANTONIO

KATE JOHNSON
KYLE

KATHY RODRIGUEZ
SAN ANTONIO

STAFF

EVAN THOMPSON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
AUSTIN

June 19, 2020

Re: Agenda Item # 6: National Register Nomination for El Segundo Barrio

Dear Commissioners:

The National Register of Historic Places needs to be more diverse and inclusive. Preservation Texas strongly endorses an expanded National Register historic district nomination for El Segundo Barrio, and supports efforts to amend the contract approved on June 15, 2020.

In 2016, Preservation Texas included this neighborhood on its Most Endangered Places list in recognition of threats to its future from demolition by neglect and redevelopment efforts. An expanded National Register nomination represents an opportunity for El Paso County to provide the leadership and support for the protection of what would be one of the largest urban historic districts in Texas with rooted in the experience of people of Mexican and African-American heritage.

By creating a district that adheres to the historic boundaries of El Segundo Barrio, valuable incentives for the preservation and improvement of historic structures that have been denied to the neighborhood will be widely available.

Now is the time to recognize this diverse history and make these powerful economic incentives available to Segundo Barrio because it will protect El Paso's heritage while improving the quality of life for its residents for many generations to come.

Sincerely,

Evan R. Thompson
Executive Director

El Paso County Commissioners Court
500 E. San Antonio, Suite 101
El Paso, Texas 79901

June 25th, 2020

Donald J. Sevigny
9809 Cornus Lane
El Paso, TX 79925

To the Honorable Commissioners Court:

I am writing to comment on the continuing discussion regarding the proposed Segundo Barrio Historic District. My current roles as the Architectural Historian at Fort Bliss, Chair of the El Paso Historic Landmark Commission (HLC), and Board of Directors for the Texas Chapter of the Association of Preservation Technology have afforded me a unique perspective on the complexity of the issue at hand. That being said, I am not representing these organizations; I am writing to you as a historic preservation professional and concerned citizen of this county.

After watching your most recent discussion from Monday, June 22nd, there are two major items I would like to address. First, a question was asked about determining if the western portion of Segundo Barrio should be in the proposed Downtown Historic District to be more attractive to investors. While federal and state tax incentives are available to properties within national historic districts, these benefits are not the primary reason for their establishment. These districts are formed to highlight the collective events, people, and architecture of an entire area that would otherwise not be individually eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. The proposed Downtown Historic District is defined by tall office buildings rooted in the ideals of Chicago's Louis Sullivan and banks adorned in eclectic revival styles reflecting the stylistic roots of Europe. Segundo Barrio is fundamentally different. It grew organically over generations of immigrant families and individuals coming and going through the neighborhood. The fact that adobe construction is still in this part of the city is phenomenal. These buildings are leagues better than any of the "Olde Towne" tourist sites peppered across the Sun Belt, and should be recognized and honored for their resilience. The same is true for the intangible heritage of Segundo Barrio. The traditions and culture of the neighborhood are incredibly rare in today's society. Across the country, close-knit neighborhoods like Segundo Barrio disappeared through unregulated urban renewal, Interstate highway expansion, and the gradual decline of compact downtowns in favor of home ownership in the suburbs. The local cultures disappeared when these neighborhoods were demolished. Despite these national trends, Segundo Barrio remains strong. A historic district should be formed to help protect the strengths this community already embodies instead of encouraging outside investors to recklessly gentrify the neighborhood.

Second, there appears to be an assumption that Hardy, Heck & Moore (HHM) were hired by the County to provide a final say in how the Downtown and Segundo Barrio Historic Districts should be delineated. I strongly disagree with this opinion. While I agree that HHM's role is to develop a survey, Determination of Eligibility, and National Register nomination for these districts, those are strictly technical matters. If you delegate the final decision to the consultants, community stakeholders will be left out of the process. The Court's decision ought to be based on the interest of the stakeholders who live and work in the proposed historic district. This is not something that should be taken lightly. My tenure on the HLC has given me valuable insight on the power of public comments, and hold the opinions of neighborhood associations in high regard. Numerous individuals made public comments during the meeting on June 22nd. As public servants, we must understand that comments from community stakeholders are more valuable than a firm that has no long-term interest in the local community after the project is completed. The community stakeholders, not the consulting firm, will be directly impacted by your decisions on June 29th.

In order to enact positive long-term change, those of us fortunate enough to hold public office have an obligation to educate themselves and support the community they were elected to represent. This vote will itself make

history, and each Commissioner has the rare opportunity to make an impactful decision that will affect generations to come. I strongly urge you to listen to the community members who so passionately shared their thoughts. By voting for Option 3, you will help bring Segundo Barrio the national recognition it so clearly deserves.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D.J. Seigny", is placed over a light blue rectangular background.

D.J. Seigny

From: [Ana Reza](#)
To: [Commissioner 2](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Segundo Barrio
Date: Thursday, June 18, 2020 2:13:20 PM

CAUTION: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source, use caution when clicking links or opening attachments.
If you believe this to be a malicious and/or phishing email, please forward this email to helpdesk@epcounty.com.

Dear County Commissioner David Stout,

I am writing to you concerning the voted against our Segundo barrio community. I urge you all to reverse the vote that was taken o June 15, 2020. We need a downtown historic district that includes a larger area of el Segundo barrio. In this vote the historical boundaries of El Segundo Barrio were not acknowledge and respected.

This barrio is the most important Mexican origin neighborhoods in the US. And this vote leaves part of it very vulnerable and there are some that have been wanting to build a Wal-Mart in these areas for many years and that would be SO shameful for our history as people and the current vote allows this threat to stay.

I urge you the court to reverse the vote and stand up for all El Segundo barrio and protect this important history in the USA.

Thank you for supporting us and let's work at bring a reversal of this vote!

Sincerely,

Ana L. Reza
9133 Cuernavaca Dr. 79907
PC 3

From: [Rafael Garcia, SJ](#)
To: [County Judge](#); [Commissioner 1](#); [Commissioner 2](#); [Commissioner 3](#); [Commissioner 4](#)
Cc: [Bishop Mark Seitz](#); [Fr. Benjamin Flores](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Segundo Barrio
Date: Thursday, June 18, 2020 3:01:28 PM

CAUTION: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source, use caution when clicking links or opening attachments.
If you believe this to be a malicious and/or phishing email, please forward this email to helpdesk@epcounty.com.

Hello Judge Samaniego and Commissioners Stout, Leon, Perez, Robinson.

I hope that you and your families are well as we continue to endure the COVID-19 crisis.

I write to you to express my deep concern and disappointment with the recent 3 to 2 vote in favor of redrawing the lines, but most importantly, the impact of this in the significant history and culture of the Segundo Barrio. At this time, I express my gratitude to Judge Samaniego and Commissioner Stout for supporting our community and parish and not voting in favor of the narrowly approved option.

Some years back, I was pastor of Sacred Heart Church from 1994-2007. Towards the end of my time as pastor, our parish and barrio lived through a similar experience when the Paso del Norte group unveiled its plan for gentrification and demolishment of part of the barrio. At that time, Bishop Armando Ochoa, Vicar General Fr. John Stowe and I wrote to the Mayor and Council expressing our opposition to a plan that would have destroyed history and displaced many vulnerable immigrant persons that live and have lived in the barrio for decades. It was at that time that we commissioned an artist to paint the mural that is on the facade of the parish gymnasium, depicting historical persons and events connected to the barrio going back to the 1890's. Again, now in 2020, as I begin a new term as pastor, we seem to be facing the same dangers, under new labels.

Certainly you are aware that the Segundo Barrio has been considered the Ellis Island of the Southwest. From 1892-1924, Ellis Island island, at the mouth of the Hudson River, received large numbers of immigrants, who settled into our nation. Similarly, and around the same dates, many emigrated from Mexico to eventually settle and populate the Segundo Barrio. The newly arrived became workers and students who are part of the history of El Paso's development as a city. They came into the U.S. through the ports of entries, the international bridges that are still in existence in the Stanton St. and Santa Fe St. areas. These bridges would be excluded from the Segundo Barrio, disconnecting them from significant history.

In 1892 (when Ellis Island began to receive immigrants) Jesuit Fr. Carlos

Pinto founded Sacred Heart School, which would be staffed by the Loretto Sisters. In 1893, Sacred Heart Church was founded with the mission of serving the immigrant Mexican community in the Segundo Barrio. (In the same year, Immaculate Conception Church was founded to serve the Anglo community, which lived further north). From 1893 to the present, Sacred Heart Church has continuously served the immigrant population -- many now second and third generation immigrants -- of the Segundo Barrio. Fr. Pinto went on to build other parishes and schools in the central part of the city, including San Ignacio, St. Francis Xavier, Guardian Angel, Holy Family. Also, Sacred Heart Church in Ciudad Juarez, very close to us on the other side of the Rio Grande. But note that the Jesuit Community, the priests, that served these parishes was located here at Sacred Heart Church, in the Segundo Barrio.

As incoming pastor of Sacred Heart, I want to express my disapproval of this plan to divide the neighborhood, history and eventually, probably the culture. I assume that like in 2006, there is an economic development plan behind this decision, a plan that one can predict will not be for the benefit of the lower income, long-time residents of the area.

The Segundo Barrio needs help and has needed help for decades. Throughout decades, irresponsible landlords have rented out apartments to vulnerable persons who do not have many options. These housing units often have inadequate ventilation, electrical systems and safety hazards of many types. These have not been addressed. The barrio has had a history of neglect. But creative improvement plans that are win-win for all, including out of town visitors, could be developed without driving out the people. Visitors seek out the historic neighborhoods when visiting cities. The barrio, with an inclusive plan, could attract many. These attractions (for example, outdoor mercados and pedestrian-only areas) could be achieved by including the present people and character, not destroying or relocating them.

I urge you to re-consider this decision. As pastor, I am beginning to notify parishioners and friends of Sacred Heart, as well as Bishop Mark Seitz of your 3-2 decision. Our parish will continue to defend the rights of the impoverished and vulnerable members of our community, and thus, the mission of our historical Jesuit parish.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

God bless, Fr. Rafael

*Fr. Rafael Garcia, S.J.
Pastor - Sacred Heart Church
Ministry with Migrant and Refugee Persons
Ministerio con Personas Migrantes y Refugiadas
602 S. Oregon St.
El Paso, TX 79901*

Tel. (915) 532-5447
Cell (505) 288-9552

From: [verocarbajal815](#)
To: [Commissioner 1](#); [Commissioner 2](#); [Commissioner 3](#); [County Judge](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Segundo Barrio
Date: Thursday, June 18, 2020 11:19:54 PM

CAUTION: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source, use caution when clicking links or opening attachments.
If you believe this to be a malicious and/or phishing email, please forward this email to helpdesk@epcounty.com.

Dear County Judge and Commissioners,
Please redraw the lines of Segundo Barrio to meet the actual boundaries of our historic barrio for the purposes of the National Register of Historic Places.
Thank you,
Veronica Carbajal
3016 Wheeling

From: [robert woolard](#)
To: [Commissioner 2](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Save the Segundo Barrio
Date: Friday, June 19, 2020 7:56:46 AM

CAUTION: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source, use caution when clicking links or opening attachments.
If you believe this to be a malicious and/or phishing email, please forward this email to helpdesk@epcounty.com.

I echo Fr. Rafael and urge you to reconsider your decision. Your 3-2 decision will split and downsize the Segundo Barrio.

Please contact me if you have any questions.
Prof. R H Woolard MD FACEP FAAEM

From: [E. B.](#)
To: [Commissioner 2](#); [Commissioner 4](#)
Cc: maxelijah@hotmail.com; [E. B.](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Segundo Barrio Plan
Date: Saturday, June 20, 2020 12:31:03 PM

CAUTION: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source, use caution when clicking links or opening attachments.
If you believe this to be a malicious and/or phishing email, please forward this email to helpdesk@epcounty.com.

Honorable Commissioners,

I am writing to you today because I am very concerned with the results of the, **Segundo Barrio Plan** that was voted on Monday. I am Laura L. Reda, I am a Veteran and a native El Pasoan. I was born and raised in El Segundo Barrio, my parents married at Sacred Church, I was baptized and had my Quinceanera at that same church. My culture and my identity is Segundo Barrio, that neighborhood is important not only to me but to the people that still live there. Segundo Barrio has been part of El Paso history for 135 years.

The plan that was voted on, will erase the history of my people. The plan that would respect the historic boundaries of the neighborhood was denied for a cost of only \$5659 of tax payers money. I stand with all the citizens of El Paso that want to preserve its history and culture, this is why I would like to propose to the Commissioners my plan.

Since the amount of \$5659 stands in the way of respecting this historic neighborhood, I would like to pay \$5659 and am happy to mail to the county that amount so that Segundo Barrio National Historic District is saved.

I would appreciate a reply to my offer via this means.

With Respect,

Laura L. Reda
202-630-3743

From: berniesargent@att.net
To: [Judge Samaniego](#); [Commissioner 4](#); [Commissioner 1](#); [Commissioner 2](#)
Cc: [Andrea Adkins-Hutchins](#); [Valerie Venecia](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: Item 6
Date: Monday, June 22, 2020 6:51:04 AM
Importance: High

CAUTION: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source, use caution when clicking links or opening attachments.
If you believe this to be a malicious and/or phishing email, please forward this email to helpdesk@epcounty.com.

Good morning all. Thankfully we are revisiting what many of us thought was a decision that left out much of our history. Below is my letter to the many professionals regarding the downsizing of the historic survey. Please take a moment to read over this message.

Thank you for your consideration,
Bernie Sargent

Dear Fellow El Pasoan,
I would like to bring to you my displeasure over the recent vote at the El Paso County Commissioner's Court to bypass the many experts' advice and vote to conduct Option 2 on Agenda Item 19., precluding the inclusion of a major portion of El Segundo Barrio in the proposed National Historic District.

The following is an excerpt from a letter written by Dr. Max Grossman:
"Segundo Barrio was established circa 1885 and has always been an extremely important historic barrio. Many El Pasoans have roots there since it is a place where countless Mexican American families began their lives in the United States. Despite the many demolitions of historic buildings over the years, the barrio still retains much of its special character and 135 years after its establishment is still a unique historical and cultural space. It has more historical markers than any other neighborhood in El Paso and most of these tell about Mexican American history.

The neighborhood was [declared to be endangered by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 2016 \[savingplaces.org\]](#).

Today the County had the opportunity to establish a Segundo Barrio National Historic District that would have included 658 buildings potentially eligible for federal and state tax credits that could have paid for up to 45% of restoration costs. This was the so called "Option 3" that would have cost the County \$49,824 in Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) funds to complete but was rejected today.

Instead the County went with "Option 2" (see attached), which will establish a much smaller Segundo Barrio Historic District, with only 446 tax-credit-eligible buildings, which will cost \$5,659 less than Option 3 in

HOT funds.”

May I remind everyone that one especially important reason for HoT Funds (Hotel-Motel Tax Funds) is the development of tourism and the proven strongest and most profitable category of tourism is Heritage Tourism, far above more beneficial financially than even sports tourism. And I should mention here that the County's own Economic Development Department argued that the \$5,659 spent during the Corona Virus pandemic was of concern. Again, I must remind everyone that the Hot Funds are meant for the purpose stated above and not for General Funds expenses related to a pandemic. We need to work towards a financial recovery, and tourism will go a long way to encourage a much-needed infusion of dollars throughout the entire Segundo Barrio where small businesses populate the entire neighborhood.

One more extremely substantial benefit of this survey is the preservation of heritage that will be researched and shared with the residents of this particularly important piece of El Paso's historic fabric. In closing, I would like to encourage everyone to support a re-vote on this item which will help in many ways for El Paso to move forward while preserving our wonderful past. Contact all the County Commissioners and the County Judge to weigh in with your support of a re-vote in support of Option 3.

My email from last week.....

From: berniesargent@att.net <berniesargent@att.net>
Sent: Monday, June 15, 2020 9:30 AM
To: Judge Samaniego <rsamaniego9@outlook.com>; Carl Robinson <commissioner4@epcounty.com>; Carlos Leon <Commissioner1@epcounty.com>; David Stout <Commissioner2@epcounty.com>
Cc: Andrea Adkins-Hutchins <AHutchins@epcounty.com>; Valerie Venecia <VVenecia@epcounty.com>
Subject: Item 19
Importance: High

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to take this opportunity to speak in favor of Item 19, Option 3. In the offing that I will not be able to call in regarding this very important item, I would like to remind everyone of the importance of saving and promoting the great heritage of our community which includes the homes and buildings that would be encircled by the proposed study. Gone are the days of teaching history in the classroom in the days of the past. A survey such as the one proposed and supported by virtually every expert in the field of history and heritage has endorsed Option 3. Utilization of the HoT

Funds will not impact the tax payers of El Paso, but rather add to our heritage promotion not only for the benefit of El Pasoan's, but for the many visitors that will be attracted by this great history.

Virtually every study performed over the last twenty plus years has proven beyond a shadow of a doubt that the heritage tourist spends more time and more money during a visit than all other forms of visitation. These folks eat in our restaurants, put heads in beds and end up sharing El Paso's attractiveness with all their acquaintances.

Regards,
Bernie Sargent

From: [Jessica Zamarripa](#)
To: [County Judge](#); [Commissioner 1](#); [Commissioner 2](#); [Commissioner 3](#); [Commissioner 4](#); [Valerie Venecia](#); [Andrea Adkins-Hutchins](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Segundo Barrio National Historic District
Date: Tuesday, June 23, 2020 10:49:24 PM

CAUTION: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source, use caution when clicking links or opening attachments.

If you believe this to be a malicious and/or phishing email, please forward this email to helpdesk@epcounty.com.

Hello, my name is Jessica Zamarripa. I am 31 years old. I have five older brothers. And now I am a mother of 3 sons. I grew up in Segundo Barrio. My parents are both from Cd Juarez, Chihuahua. They crossed over in the 1970s and are both legal residents. They are not together. But when they crossed over to El Paso, Texas the first place they rented an apartment was in Segundo Barrio. They separated as many marriages do. My mother became a single mother of six. My five older brothers and I. My mother moved from apartments to apartments the last address was on 406 S. Campbell apt 13. That's the one I remember most. I lived there until I was 12 years old. I went to Aoy Elementary and I was third grade queen and I was the last queen crowned as they did away with that event. Then I went to Roosevelt Elementary for 4th and 5th grade. And I was awarded the All Girl Trophy at the end of 5th grade by Mrs. Stone (the principal). And lastly I went to Guillen Middle School for 6th grade and 7th grade. I was in the National Jr Honor Society and in GT classes. While I lived in Segundo Barrio my mother's choice of church was Sacred Heart. I was baptized, I did my First holy communion, my confirmation and I even had my quinceñera mass there. I know for sure that Father Rafael Garcia held my first holy communion, confirmation and quinceñera mass. I even have pictures with him. I was raised Cathalolic by my mother and Sacred Heart has been my church even after moving from Segundo Barrio. A struck of good luck hit us and we moved to the Eastside when I was 12 going on 13 years old. But when I lived in Segundo Barrio, I remember all I had as a child were dreams and wished for many things that at the time we couldn't afford. My mother being a single mother worked two jobs to support us. She never got child support from my father and we never received housing. We only got help with food stamps. But sometimes it wasn't enough and sometimes we had nothing to eat at home. My mom tried hard but sometimes we just didn't have food. I remember one time my brother and I ate a flour tortilla and sliced jalapeños inside because we had nothing else to eat. When we didn't have toilet paper we would use newspaper. When our electricity would be disconnected we would use candles. And when our gas was disconnected we would heat water inside the microwave to take showers. We lived in a two bedroom apartment with six people. We shared one bathroom and I would wake up at 5:00AM to be able to take a shower first. I was never late to school I was left early. There was a time when I didn't have a bed and would sleep on the floor. I had a small space to myself where I had a white \$50 desk from Kmart that I loved. And on top I had wood shelves where I would put my stuffed animals and my trophies and awards from school. That was my sacred space. My small sanctuary. I never had a little girls bedroom set nor my own room as a child. I had to share with my brothers. I also remember we used to hide from the landlord every month because my mom wouldn't pay the rent on time. So when we heard him go over we would all hide until he left. We didn't have a car so we would walk. I only went to downtown stores. I didn't know what was Walmart or Target or Cielo Vista mall back then. My mom had friends that would gift us clothes. And I remember I was always on the secret Santa program in school. Now I know that program was for poor people like us but I thank them for that. I haven't married, but if someday God puts a good man in my life I would marry at Sacred Heart because that's about the last thing I just need to do! But I can tell you that I am looking forward to baptize my sons there and I wish for Father Garcia to be the one who baptizes them. Sacred Heart means a lot to me and my family. I also went to an ACTS retreat at Sacred Heart and I became an ACTS sister. It was the first time Sacred Heart had the retreat. I was lucky enough to go. After we made the ACTS group in which I served and I was the president of the group. I helped fun raise \$2,000 along with the other ladies. That money was for future ACTS retreats and group activities. I had to leave the group but if Im not mistaken the ACTS group is still active. After moving from Segundo Barrio I would still attend mass there. I would drive from the Eastside to Segundo Barrio just for mass. Why wouldn't I if that's my church! Father Carlos M. Pinto died 101 years ago. And I don't think he would have ever imagined what is now happening or in dispute with Sacred Heart Church. It's like if all his work is thrown away. Let's start by respecting his work and memory.

All my bothers went to Bowie Hugh School except for me. Once we moved to the Eastside I then went to El Dorado High School. I was part of the first graduating class of 2007. I graduated with college credits and then went to UTEP

right after high school. I graduated from UTEP in 2013. I have a bachelor's of art in Spanish and my minor was in Communication Studies. My oldest brother is a teacher. He was in fact the Student Aid for my 5th grade class. So my brother was my teacher in a way! He currently teaches 5th grade at Clardy Elementary. My second oldest brother worked for Child Protective Services for many years here in El Paso. He now lives in Austin and he has a master's in social work. Three out of six in my family are college graduates. My two oldest brothers and I and they were my role models. I am currently not employed and I am a full time single mother of 3. I have an 11 year old about to go to middle school, 4 year old with Autism about to be in Pre Kinder and a 2 year old. And I cannot thank God more for have given us the opportunity to love from Segundo Barrio and have a better life. But I am also proud of where I come from. It is because I grew up in Segundo Barrio that I am who I am today. We have a close bond with our Segundo Barrio people that we are like family. We also have a Segundo Barrio Apparel Company. Mr. Bobby Lerma is the owner and he makes Segundo Barrio t-shirts and sells them. He helps schools and students with what is sold. Isn't that amazing! Segundo Barrio people helping Segundo Barrio people! We are united. Many of us shared the petition on Facebook and signed it. I am an administrator of a Facebook page and shared it and many of us shared it for people to help us sign. I know there was more than 1,600 signatures how many more do we need? So I can ask more people to help us. What more do we need to keep what is ours and what belongs to us? It's like if someone goes to your house and tells you the kitchen is not yours. Are you going to accept that? No right because it's your house and no one can do that. Why did I choose the kitchen? Because we need food to eat and survive. So why are you trying to take away Sacred Heart Church from Segundo Barrio? It's not a kitchen, although they do have a kitchen where we would enjoy food on the weekends, but it's similar in that it's our spiritual and soul food! We need Sacred Heart Church to be part of Segundo Barrio because it is part Segundo Barrio. You can't take away what is ours! Just like I or anyone else can't take away your kitchen or what is yours. If you believe in God, please don't do this to us. And if you don't, please don't do this to us! I will be totally honest, I did graduate from UTEP but maybe I don't know much of other things, but I do know about having respect, morals, and integrity. I believe in God and I know that with God all things are possible. And that if God is with us it does not matter who is against us. What do you win by doing this? I can tell you what we win. We win the right to be where we belong! Even if you don't believe in God life is a constant roller coaster. Sometimes you win, sometimes you loose. Don't do something thinking you're winning and later on loose something truly valuable to you. Because that's life, do good and good will come do bad and bad will come. Do what's right! And what is right is to respect el Segundo Barrio National Historic District! And because I belive in God, thank you for your time and God bless you and guide you and illuminate you to do what's right! El respeto al derecho ajeno es la paz!" Benito Juarez.

With all due respect,
Jessica Zamarripa

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Sandra Ivette Enríquez](#)
To: [County Judge](#); [Commissioner 1](#); [Commissioner 2](#); [Commissioner 3](#); [Commissioner 4](#); [Valerie Venecia](#); [Andrea Adkins-Hutchins](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Writing in Support of Option 3- Segundo Barrio National Historic District
Date: Thursday, June 25, 2020 9:50:52 AM

CAUTION: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source, use caution when clicking links or opening attachments.
If you believe this to be a malicious and/or phishing email, please forward this email to helpdesk@epcounty.com.

Dear County Commissioners Court,

I am writing in hopes you will reconsider your vote regarding the boundaries of the proposed Segundo Barrio National Historic District. You simply cannot separate a historic community. El Pasoans know that the boundaries of the barrio are Paisano to the Border Highway and Santa Fe to Cotton. Splitting the western section of the barrio from the designation is erasing the rich culture and history not only of El Segundo Barrio, but also El Paso. Barrio residents, local historians, and preservation organizations have overwhelmingly voiced their support to create the Historic District based on the established boundaries that have existed for over a hundred years. This is the right thing to do; otherwise, there seem to be ulterior motives for the irresponsible and insensitive decision to divide this important Mexican American barrio.

As a Public Historian, I know that Historic Preservation experts have remarked that we need more Latino Historic Landmarks and Districts in the United States. This is a great opportunity for El Paso to honor and celebrate its Mexican American heritage. El Segundo Barrio is important not only for the city, but also for our understanding of Mexican American/Latino history in the U.S. Let's do this right!

I no longer live in El Paso; however, I visit home often. I can't imagine El Paso without El Segundo Barrio. I couldn't even imagine El Segundo divided in two. This area means so much for so many in the city--many, who have already shared their concerns. It's time to listen and honor the voices of your constituents.

Thank you for your time,

Sandra I. Enríquez, PhD
Assistant Professor of History
University of Missouri--Kansas City

From: mandptowne@twc.com
To: [Commissioner 2](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please choose option #3 for Segundo Barrio
Date: Thursday, June 25, 2020 3:41:54 PM

CAUTION: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source, use caution when clicking links or opening attachments.
If you believe this to be a malicious and/or phishing email, please forward this email to helpdesk@epcounty.com.

Mr. Stout,

I have been a resident of this city since 1960 and have visited Sacred Heart Church often. To leave it out of any boundary in regards to the Segundo Barrio, would, in my opinion, be a mistake. I hope you will consider placing the church and area around it in the same district as the rest of the Segundo Barrio. Please consider selecting option#3 in your decision. Thank you for the time.

Michael Towne
21 Cumberland Circle

From: [Paloma Towne](#)
To: [Commissioner 2](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Segundo Barrio Historic District
Date: Thursday, June 25, 2020 3:52:43 PM

CAUTION: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source, use caution when clicking links or opening attachments.
If you believe this to be a malicious and/or phishing email, please forward this email to helpdesk@epcounty.com.

Mr. Stout,

Please consider including Sacred Heart Church as part of the Segundo Barrio Historic District by choosing option #3 when it is time to vote. During the religious persecution in Mexico, many families from Mexico came to Sacred Heart to receive the sacraments. Thank you for your consideration.

Paloma Towne
21 Cumberland Circle

From: [Sue Barnum](#)
To: [Commissioner 4](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Segundo Barrio should not be separated
Date: Thursday, June 18, 2020 9:22:57 AM

CAUTION: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source, use caution when clicking links or opening attachments.
If you believe this to be a malicious and/or phishing email, please forward this email to helpdesk@epcounty.com.

Hello!

I'm an amateur historian and professional librarian who has come to love El Paso and its community. I researched and wrote the article about Segundo Barrio for Wikipedia. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/El_Segundo_Barrio [en.wikipedia.org]). I know this community is historic, and, in addition, it is also endangered. What is being done about separating the neighborhood into different districts is ridiculous and further endangers the community.

I ask that you reconsider.

Thank you,
Susan Barnum

From: [Crysti Couture](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] SEGUNDO // Historic District
Date: Tuesday, June 16, 2020 1:20:07 PM

CAUTION: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source, use caution when clicking links or opening attachments.
If you believe this to be a malicious and/or phishing email, please forward this email to helpdesk@epcounty.com.

Good Afternoon All,

Let me preface this by saying that I have always been a supporter of the City and County Government. I love my City and worked for Visit El Paso for many years as their social media strategist and ambassador. I also volunteered for the Trost Society, and even considered joining the Historical Commission. I applaud your effort and willingness to listen to the advice of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. However, there has been an error. The recent decision to divide Segundo Barrio is shameful, as far as I can see.

The El Paso community knows me as Crysti Couture, my nom de plume. However, I was born Christian Ponce-Delgadillo and lived in Chihuahuita for most of my childhood. I went to Aoy, my family and I crossed the bridge into Juarez weekly, we shopped on El Paso Street every other day, and our neighbors - for the most part - all knew each other. Many of the people I grew up with, including myself, went on to create successful businesses and contributed to the growth of El Paso in a meaningful way. The reason we became ambassadors for our City is because we were RIGHT THERE when change was happening in the early-1990's. We knew what it was like to be a gang-infested neighborhood, get cleaned up, and become beautiful and vibrant once again. Segundo Barrio, more than any other neighborhood, has suffered and prospered, and is a shining testament to what kind of progress can happen *when neighbors and the local government work together*, and deserves the protection of being named a Historic District in full.

Segundo Barrio does not deserve to be divided. According to the map, this is literally what has been done, using Campbell Street (?) as the dividing point.

1. Firstly, the [National Trust for Historic Preservation's study named BOTH Chihuahuita and Segundo Barrio \[savingplaces.org\]](#) as endangered. We are one giant neighborhood, truly. If you have to even second guess that fact, just go to the El Paso Museum of History right now, go to the second floor and take a look at the giant early-1900's map of El Paso. To create a fake boundary in the middle of the Segundo Barrio neighborhood is disrespectful and a disservice to the entire community.
2. By creating this non-existent boundary, one side of the neighborhood will benefit from the perks that being a Historic District would bring, while the other side doesn't. How would you feel if in your own neighborhoods, this happened? If your neighbor received grants to beautify his facade, while your building can't apply for the same because an imaginary line was drawn in the sand?
3. The City has already committed so much energy and effort into the Paseo de las Luces project, which - according to your ruling - would now sit outside the Historic District. Why commit so much funding to a project that wouldn't be complemented by a neighborhood with a historic designation?
4. No matter what part of town you live in, and you may not like this fact personally, but Segundo Barrio and Chihuahuita is a part of each of YOUR histories. This is the source of El Paso's cultural identity and to ignore that willfully is to throw your own histories

down the drain. If the reason for this division was to save \$5k in HOT funds, then we can, as a *City*, attempt to raise those funds so that the proper designation can be given to the entire neighborhood.

I hope to hear from all of you, and what we can realistically do to help rectify this grave mistake.

Thank you,



[\[crysticouture.com\]](http://crysticouture.com)