

SUNLAND PARK POLICE DEPARTMENT

MEMORANDUM

TO: City Manager Mario Juarez Infante
FROM: Sunland Park Police Department
DATE: August 25, 2026
RE: Operational Impact of Texas Road Closures Along the New Mexico State Line

Purpose

This memorandum addresses the operational impact on the Sunland Park Police Department (SPPD) resulting from the road closures and access restrictions recently implemented by the State of Texas along the New Mexico state line within Sunland Park's jurisdiction. Overall, day-to-day patrol operations are not significantly affected by these closures. However, one specific location presents a serious concern that would directly delay emergency response, and a related concern regarding the department's ability to support a large-scale evacuation warrants the City's immediate attention.

Community Center Access — 3000 Girl Scout Lane/800 El Centauro Drive

The Community Center, located at 3000 Girl Scout Lane, belongs to the Colonia Escondida Association, Inc. and includes a pool and tennis courts that regularly draw members of the public. The facility's only ingress and egress point is El Centauro Drive.

Note: the address on record differs by source. County parcel records list the facility at 3000 Girl Scout Lane, while Google Maps lists it as 800 El Centauro Drive. Both refer to the same site.

Under the current closures, **the only route by which SPPD can reach the Community Center runs through the Texas side:** from Gibson Veck to Frontera, then Siete Lagunas to El Centauro Drive. There is no viable New Mexico-side route into this facility. This means that if an active threat or medical emergency occurred at the Community Center and the Texas-side access was otherwise inaccessible, SPPD would have **no route into the facility at all**. We would be forced to enter Girl Scout Lane and either jump a rock wall or scale a chain-link fence topped with barbed wire to reach the facility.

This exposure is compounded by the condition of Girl Scout Lane itself, which is unpaved, narrow, and offers less-than-optimal driving conditions, further slowing any response that attempts to use it. In addition, a gate is located one house east of the intersection of Gary Lane and Girl Scout Lane, adding a further obstacle along this corridor if SPPD needs to take the more circuitous route through Texas to Gary Lane.

Gate Locations Affecting the Area

Gates currently restrict movement at the following points:

- Frontera and San Gabriel
- The state line at Boy Scout and Hacienda Roja
- Gary Place and Girl Scout

Mass Evacuation Concern

SPPD's most significant concern is the department's ability to support a mass evacuation of New Mexico-side residents. Under normal conditions, residents would travel via Futurity or Appaloosa to reach Sunland Park Drive, the primary evacuation route. If access to Sunland Park Drive was lost for any reason, the only remaining option would be Frontera Drive on the Texas side.

All gates along this route are currently locked, and the poles installed at Frontera and San Gabriel would present a significant obstacle to an evacuation in progress. Compounding this, SPPD does not currently have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the El Paso Police Department or the City of El Paso covering this corridor. Without one, opening this route in an emergency would require a mutual aid request, and El Paso personnel would need to respond in person to unlock the gates and remove the poles before evacuation traffic could pass — a delay SPPD cannot control and cannot resolve on its own.

This risk is not one-directional. If the State of Texas needed to evacuate its own population and lost access to Frontera, a portion of the Texas-side population would only be able to evacuate through New Mexico — but the same gates and poles Texas has installed at Frontera and San Gabriel, Boy Scout and Hacienda Roja would block that route as well. The closures create a mutual chokepoint that could impede evacuation on both sides of the state line.

Recommendation

SPPD recommends the city consider the following on a priority basis:

1. Establish a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the City of El Paso defining an expedited process — including after-hours contact and response-time expectations — for opening the Frontera/San Gabriel gates, Boy Scout and Hacienda Roja during a declared emergency or evacuation. Another possibility might be coordinating with El Paso on a different type of gate that does not depend on gates being unlocked or poles being physically removed. Maybe something that is siren activated or can be remotely activated by emergency personnel.
2. Evaluate paving and widening Girl Scout Lane to bring it to a standard suitable for emergency apparatus as there are at least 5 residences that are served by Sunland Park emergency responders that will use Girl Scout to access those residences. If the planned housing project moves forward, then this is an operational need.

Respectfully submitted,

Kiri Daines, Chief of Police

Sunland Park Police Department