

**CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS
AGENDA ITEM
AGENDA SUMMARY FORM**

DEPARTMENT: Mayor & Council

AGENDA DATE: 03.31.20

CONTACT PERSON NAME AND PHONE NUMBER: Representative Cassandra Hernandez
915.212.0003

DISTRICT(S) AFFECTED: District 3

STRATEGIC GOAL: 4: ENHANCE EL PASO'S QUALITY OF LIFE THROUGH RECREATIONAL, CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS

SUBJECT:

APPROVE a resolution / ordinance / lease to do what? OR AUTHORIZE the City Manager to do what? Be descriptive of what we want Council to approve. Include \$ amount if applicable.

Discussion and Action on naming facilities within the new Community Center located at the 7300 Block of Alameda Ave. in District 3, to the Enrique Moreno Library and Steve Yellen Gymnasium.

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION:

Discussion of the what, why, where, when, and how to enable Council to have reasonably complete description of the contemplated action. This should include attachment of bid tabulation, or ordinance or resolution if appropriate. What are the benefits to the City of this action? What are the citizen concerns?

The new 2012 Quality of Life combo community center will encompass a gymnasium and library. In effort to honor two individuals who have contributed their passion and expertise to El Paso, neighborhood support was sought and provided in advocacy for naming the center's library after Enrique Moreno and its gymnasium after Steve Yellen.

PRIOR COUNCIL ACTION:

Has the Council previously considered this item or a closely related one?

Yes.

AMOUNT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:

How will this item be funded? Has the item been budgeted? If so, identify funding source by account numbers and description of account. Does it require a budget transfer?

No additional costs, as center is still in construction, signage is already incorporated into plans.



CASSANDRA HERNANDEZ
City Council Representative - District 3

Ms. Norma Martinez
Interim Director
El Paso Public Libraries

February 11, 2020

Dear Ms. Martinez,

As you may be aware, the City is constructing a new community center in the Lower Valley, with a combo gymnasium and library. This is a very welcomed and positive project for the neighborhood and we are working with Parks and Recreation and the community to ensure its success.

The name of the center is currently the Alameda Community Center, which my office, along with the support of the neighborhood are vying to have it changed to *Valle Bajo Community Center*. Through the park renaming process, we gathered signatures for the new name and while we were at it, we also petitioned signatures for giving a special name to the library. We would like to propose the name of *Enrique Moreno* for this library, and respectfully ask for your assistance in its naming.

Enrique Moreno was a respected lawyer in El Paso, whose career spanned more than 30 years. He received numerous awards, including a nomination in 1999 by President Bill Clinton for a judgeship on the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. Mr. Moreno was intensely proud of his Mexican ancestry and cultural heritage. He is known in our city by residents and city leaders alike, as a champion of social justice as he stood for individual rights and civic process. Mr. Moreno passed away on October 10, 2019.

We understand that the library naming guidelines includes a requirement that if a library is to be named after a person, that that individual be deceased for at least a year. Given that the center will open in the summer of 2020, it would be financially sensible and efficient to incorporate the necessary signage while the center is still in construction. We ask that this be taken into consideration and a waiver for this condition to be granted, if deemed appropriate.

Please let us know how we can continue the library naming process or if you have any questions. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cassandra Hernandez".

Cassandra Hernandez
City Council Representative

Enclosed:

1. Community Signatures for naming library after Enrique Moreno
2. Biography of Enrique Moreno
3. News articles after the passing of Enrique Moreno

Enrique Moreno Biography



Originally from Chihuahua, MX. Enrique Moreno decided to move with his family to El Paso when he was a child where he attended public schools. Upon his graduation from Austin High School, Enrique attained his undergraduate degree from Harvard University and his law degree from Harvard Law School.

He returned to El Paso to continue his career. Moreno began his law career in 1981 as a personal injury and product liability attorney. He established his own law office in 1999. In a singular distinction that speaks to his exemplary capacities as an attorney, President Bill Clinton nominated him in 1999 for a judgeship on the Fifth Circuit

Court of Appeals—the first El Pasoan to be so honored. He received, unanimously, the highest rating given judicial nominees by the American Bar Association. President Clinton re-nominated him to the Fifth Circuit on January 3, 2001.

Throughout his career, he was listed by Woodward/White as one of the Best Lawyers in America; among the “Winningest Firms in the U.S.” by the National Law Journal; as a “Texas Super Lawyer” by Texas Monthly (Top 100 in Texas); among the “Top Lawyers in El Paso” by the El Paso Herald Post Survey of State Judges; and as “Lawyer of the Year” by the Mexican American Bar Association of El Paso. He also received the “Albert Armendariz, Sr. Lifetime Achievement Award” from the Mexican American Bar Association.

Enrique was always intensely proud of his Mexican ancestry and cultural heritage; he was honored to serve as Abogado Consultor (consulting attorney) Del Gobierno de Mexico. Enrique Moreno was a member of The El Paso Times Advisory Board and Known in our city because he stood for individual rights and civic process. Mr. Moreno passed on October 10, 2019.

El Paso News Article on Enrique Moreno

El Paso Times
PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

El Paso lawyer and defender of civil rights, Enrique Moreno, passed away Thursday

María Cortés González and Aaron Montes, *El Paso Times* Published 8:42 a.m. MT Oct. 11, 2019 | Updated 12:18 p.m. MT Oct. 12, 2019



El Paso attorneys Enrique Moreno and Lynn Coyle hold a news conference Wednesday, Dec. 19, 2018, at Casa Vides to discuss the death of Jakelin Caal Maquin, who died in Border Patrol custody. (Photo: Mark Lambie/*El Paso Times* file)

The El Paso community has lost a champion of social justice in the passing of El Paso attorney Enrique Moreno, friends and community leaders say.

Moreno, a civil rights lawyer and once nominee for the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans, died Thursday morning.

State Sen. José Rodríguez said in a statement that Moreno stood for individual rights and civic progress.

"A generous and kind man, Enrique gave selflessly of his time and considerable expertise to not only workers and the disenfranchised, but also to candidates, officeholders, and all who aspired to make El Paso a better place — he cannot be replaced," he said.

Two Republican senators, Phil Gramm and Kay Bailey Hutchison, thwarted the nomination by sending a letter to Senate Judiciary Chairman Orrin Hatch claiming that Moreno was unqualified to sit on the 5th Circuit.

Moreno was not bitter, saying the good thing was he had kept his day job.

"I continued to practice law and to do what I love. It's not productive to second-guess the way these things turn out. I'm a person of faith and I believe things happen for a reason. I've tried to live without bitterness or resentment," he said.

For Esparza, the memories of jogging around Ascarate Park three to four times for exercise and sitting in Moreno's office discussing current events and El Paso issues will live on.

The district attorney said his farewell to his friend on Thursday morning, hours before appearing before Judge Sam Medrano in the arraignment for the accused El Paso mass shooter.

Moreno was a healthy and strong person during his life and it was difficult to see him just before his passing, Esparza added. He had been diagnosed with cancer.

"He looked at me and says 'thank you,' and I am like no, I go no, really, it was thank you," Esparza said. "I owe him an enormous amount."

"It was a tearful goodbye this morning when he passed on," Esparza said.

Moreno was a member of the El Paso Times Advisory Board.

Visitation will be from 5 to 7 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 13, at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, 131 S. Zaragoza Road. A rosary will be said afterward. A funeral Mass will be celebrated by Bishop Mark J. Seitz at noon Monday, Oct. 14 at the church.

Interment will follow at Mount Carmel Cemetery, 401 S. Zaragoza Road.

The family asks that in lieu of flowers, people consider contributing to Annunciation House, 1003 E. San Antonio Ave, El Paso, Texas 79901.

María Cortés González covers entertainment and trending news in the El Paso area. She may be reached at 915-546-6150; mgonzalez@elpasotimes.com. [Support more coverage like this with a subscription](#). Aaron Montes can be reached at amontes@elpasotimes.com

El Paso News Article on Enrique Moreno



Influential El Paso attorney dies from cancer

by: KTSM Staff

Posted: Oct 10, 2019 / 08:01 PM MDT / Updated: Oct 12, 2019 / 09:10 AM MDT

Prominent El Paso attorney, Enrique Moreno, died on Thursday from complications of cancer.

Moreno served as an attorney for more than 30 years and was once a federal judicial nominee to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.

Throughout his years, Moreno won several large cases including a \$27.5 million judgment for an Iran-born American citizen against Southwest Airlines in a landmark racial profiling case.

He also represented the family of Jakelin Caal. She was the 7-year old Guatemalan girl who migrated to the United States from Guatemala and later died from an infection.

More recently, Moreno was hired by the Mexican government to represent the 8 Mexican family victims in a civil suit against the Cielo Vista Walmart shooter who allegedly shot and murdered 22 people on August 3 in El Paso.

Sen. José Rodríguez released a statement on the passing telling KTSM 9 News, “El Paso has lost a champion for social justice, individual rights, and civic progress.” He continued, “A generous and kind man, Enrique gave selflessly of his time and considerable expertise to not only workers and the disenfranchised, but also to candidates, officeholders, and all who aspired to make El Paso a better place – he cannot be replaced.”

Moreno was 63.



CÉSAR J. BLANCO

TEXAS STATE REPRESENTATIVE • DISTRICT 76

March 24, 2020

Dear Mayor and Council,

In anticipation of the City's new community combo center located at 7600 Alameda, I am submitting my support of the application to name this location the *Valle Bajo Community Center*, a hub that is being constructed in the heart of the Lower Valley. In addition, I am in support of naming its library after respected El Paso lawyer, *Enrique Moreno*, who passed away last year. The name Valle Bajo is not only representative of our border city's Spanish speaking culture but also the historic geographical location of this neighborhood in which it's residents are proud to be from. Just as the center's proposed name is illustrative of the dual life of living on the border, so was the life of Enrique Moreno.

Born in Chihuahua and moving to El Paso at a young age, he is a model to Dreamers. In attending Harvard for his undergrad and law degree, he is an inspiration to those who receive their higher education outside of El Paso, to return to serve the city that raised them. Throughout his legal career, he represented the disenfranchised, taking on a landmark racial profiling case and representing migrants. For a man who spent much of his time reading, naming the library after him will be an honorary reminder of his contributions to law and social justice.

Both names of Valle Bajo for center as a whole and Enrique Moreno for the library meld together the significance of our heritage and of those who strive to protect it. Young students who will utilize the center and attend this library can learn of all that can be accomplished through hard work, education and admiration for the border experience, hopefully encouraging them to follow the path of achievement, not only for themselves but for their community.

Through Mr. Moreno's expertise and devotion to El Paso, many community leaders, like myself, were guided and mentored by him. And, whether it be at the library, flat fields, gymnasium, this Lower Valley neighborhood can be proud of their experiences at the Valle Bajo Community Center, where a sense of community and a desire for progress can be instilled in its users. For all this, I ask that you consider the name of Valle Bajo for the center and Enrique Moreno for the library. Thank you.

Sincerely,

César J. Blanco
Texas State Representative
House District 76 – El Paso

CC: Ms. Norman Martinez, Interim Director, El Paso Public Libraries



DATE 3-24-20

Dear Mayor and Council,

In anticipation of the City's new community combo center located at 7600 Alameda, I am submitting my support of the application to name this location the *Valle Bajo Community Center*, a hub that is being constructed in the heart of the Lower Valley. In addition, I am in support of naming it's library after respected El Paso lawyer, *Enrique Moreno*, who passed away last year. The name Valle Bajo is not only representative of our border city's Spanish speaking culture but also the historic geographical location of this neighborhood in which it's residents are proud to be from. Just as the center's proposed name is illustrative of the dual life of living on the border, so was the life of Enrique Moreno.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mario Cenicerros', written in a cursive style.

Mario Cenicerros
RNA President

CC: Ms. Norman Martinez, Interim Director, El Paso Public Libraries