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**NEWS
RELEASE**

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WinterFest 2025 Welcomes Thousands Downtown, Making the Holiday Tradition a Huge Success

EL PASO, Texas—The City of El Paso is pleased to announce that WinterFest 2025 delivered a record-breaking holiday season, welcoming thousands of visitors to downtown and solidifying its reputation as one of the premier holiday festivals in the nation.

Known as The Coolest Fest in the Southwest, WinterFest 2025 dazzled residents and visitors with more than one million holiday lights, family-friendly attractions, an outdoor ice rink, festive programming, and the beloved annual lights parade. The six-week celebration concluded January 4, 2026, drawing out more than 580,000 visitors throughout the season.

WinterFest 2025 also earned prestigious national recognition, taking the top spot as #1 Best Christmas Market by Newsweek and placing second for Best Holiday Market in the Nation by USA Today.

Opening night on November 22 drew more than 68,000 attendees, featuring the ceremonial holiday tree lighting and the Scherr Legate Lights Parade. Throughout the season, visitors created lasting holiday memories while enjoying the 30th annual lights parade, festive décor in San Jacinto Plaza and Cleveland Square Park, The Rink at the Convention Center, and Holiday Fiestas.

“We are excited and thrilled with the growth of WinterFest this past year,” said Parks and Recreation Director Pablo Caballero. “We want to thank the community for coming out and celebrating with us, and we are grateful to our partners who helped make the WinterFest season possible.”

WinterFest 2025 was also recognized for its role in boosting local tourism and supporting Downtown businesses.

Key Highlights of the Successful Season

- **National Rankings:** In addition to the Newsweek top ranking, WinterFest was recognized by USA Today for its exceptional holiday experience and community engagement.
- **Signature Events:** The Scherr Legate Lights Parade featured 72 entries that included 57 lighted floats and drew approximately 68,000 people along the Downtown parade route.
- **Holiday Fiestas:** Presented by Pointe Homes and held every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, Holiday Fiestas drew more than 344,500 attendees, featuring live performances by local dance groups, bands, DJs, and special cultural celebrations such as a Mexican Posada.
- **Annual Celebrations:** Expanded festivities included a new holiday tree in San Jacinto Plaza, a sensory-friendly tree lighting, The Market at WinterFest, free pictures with Santa courtesy of GECU, and a holiday food truck village.
- **The Rink:** Located outside the El Paso Convention Center, The Rink presented by GECU welcomed nearly 20,000 skaters, offering family-friendly ice skating, music, live performances, and a treat area.
- **New Year's Eve El Paso Star Drop:** The second annual celebration attracted approximately 18,700 attendees, featuring a live band, DJ, and a star inspired by the Franklin Mountains.

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- **Family Attractions:**

- Pictures with Santa presented by GECU
- Holiday Movies by the El Paso Community Foundation Plaza Classic Film Festival
- Lotería Nights
- El Paso Streetcar holiday performances and events

Additional holiday programming and festivities were hosted by the El Paso Public Libraries, El Paso Museum of Art, El Paso Museum of History, El Paso Animal Services, and the Mexican American Cultural Center, further enhancing the seasonal experience.

Created by the City of El Paso, WinterFest is the largest holiday festival in West Texas and Southern New Mexico. The event is programmed by the Parks and Recreation Department with support from more than a dozen City departments, Destination El Paso, and the Downtown Management District.

The WinterFest team, led by the Parks and Recreation Department, will take a short break before beginning planning for WinterFest 2026 in mid-February. **WinterFest returns to downtown El Paso on Saturday, November 21, 2026.** Organizations interested in sponsoring or participating can visit www.EPWinterFest.com.

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