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**NEWS
RELEASE**

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City of El Paso Reaches Settlement in Daniel Villegas Civil Case

EL PASO, Texas—The City of El Paso and Daniel Villegas have reached a settlement agreement, resolving a federal civil lawsuit against the City. The lawsuit, filed in 2015, alleges violations of constitutional rights stemming from the investigation, arrest and prosecution of Mr. Villegas related to the 1993 murders of Armando “Mando” Lazzo and Robert “Bobby” England.

Before proceeding to trial, both parties agreed to participate in mediation, a common step in civil lawsuits that allows them to work with a neutral mediator to explore whether the case could be resolved. The City successfully reached a mutually agreed-upon resolution through mediation in the amount of \$8 million.

By resolving the case through mediation, the City eliminated the uncertainty of a jury trial, the risk of a potentially much larger judgment, and the costs and delays associated with continued litigation, including post-trial motions and potential appeals. Mr. Villegas was seeking \$20 million in damages, and the case involved events that occurred more than 30 years ago, creating significant challenges associated with witness availability and the passage of time.

“After carefully evaluating the risks, costs and uncertainties associated with continued litigation, the City determined resolving this matter through mediation was in the best interests of the City and its taxpayers,” said Karla Nieman, City Attorney for the City of El Paso. “This resolution brings finality to a case that has been in litigation for years while avoiding the additional expense and uncertainty of trial and potential appeals.”

This settlement is not an admission of liability or wrongdoing by the City of El Paso. The City has a responsibility to manage public resources prudently while ensuring that legal matters are addressed appropriately. This resolution is consistent with the City’s ongoing commitment to responsibly manage taxpayer resources while resolving legal disputes in a manner that best serves the public interest.

Mr. Villegas filed a federal civil lawsuit against the City of El Paso and several current and former police officers in 2015. In 2025, Judge David C. Guaderrama of the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas granted summary judgment dismissing charges of malicious prosecution, false arrest, failure-to-intervene and conspiracy claims against all defendants in this case.

Civil lawsuits often involve multiple legal claims. While the Court dismissed several of Mr. Villegas’ claims, others remained pending. Those remaining claims would have been resolved through a jury trial scheduled in August if not for mediation.

The allegations in this litigation concern events that occurred more than 30 years ago. The City continues to have confidence in the El Paso Police Department and its commitment to professionalism, constitutional policing, accountability and public service.

Over the past three decades, the Department has implemented numerous improvements, including updated investigative procedures, body-worn cameras, supervisory review, expanded officer training, policy revisions and the use of modern technology to strengthen accountability and transparency.

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Good Governance
Leadership that is responsive + reliable

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