



For Immediate Release

Nov. 4, 2025

Rebuilding an El Paso Icon: Wyler Aerial Tramway Project Moves Forward

EL PASO—The long-awaited rebirth of one of El Paso’s most beloved landmarks is underway, thanks to the steadfast support of the Texas Legislature. With \$27 million in state funding secured, the Wyler Aerial Tramway at Franklin Mountains State Park is on track to once again carry visitors to the top of Ranger Peak, where they can take in panoramic views of two countries and three states.

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), in partnership with the Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority (RMA), has begun Phase I construction, funded through \$20 million in legislative appropriations over the past three sessions. This phase will deliver expanded parking, improved accessibility, upgraded restrooms, and new visitor amenities, laying the groundwork for a completely reimagined experience at the base of the Franklin Mountains.

In the most recent 2025 legislative session, lawmakers approved an additional \$7 million to jump-start Phase II, which will include construction of a modern tramway system, visitor center, aerial station, and expanded trails and facilities. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation (TPWF) will lead a private fundraising effort to raise an additional \$5–7 million in philanthropic support to help complete Phase II.

“On behalf of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission, I want to extend our deep gratitude to the Texas Legislature and the El Paso legislative delegation for their unwavering commitment to this community and to this project,” said Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission Chairman Paul Foster. “The legislature’s investment ensures that this iconic attraction—so loved by generations of El Pasoans—will rise again. The Wyler Aerial Tramway connects us not only to

the grandeur of the Franklin Mountains, but also to the sense of pride that comes with being a Texan.”

TPWD Executive Director David Yoskowitz, Ph.D., praised the collaboration that has brought the project to this point. “This is what partnership looks like—state leadership, local support, and private philanthropy all coming together for the people of Texas,” Yoskowitz said. “The Wyler Aerial Tramway is more than an engineering feat; it’s a symbol of how Texans work together to make great things happen.”

Originally constructed in 1959 by El Paso broadcaster Karl Wyler and donated to TPWD in 1997, the tramway quickly became one of El Paso’s top attractions, welcoming more than 40,000 visitors annually before it closed in 2018 due to safety concerns.

“TPWF is honored to help write the next chapter of this remarkable story,” said Anne Brown, Executive Director of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation. “With the Legislature’s investment leading the way, private donors and local partners now have the opportunity to join in bringing back a landmark that means so much to the people of El Paso and to visitors from across Texas and beyond.”

When complete, the reimagined Wyler Aerial Tramway will feature a new, state-of-the-art tram system, improved accessibility, and enhanced visitor amenities—all designed to honor the site’s history while inspiring new generations to experience the rugged beauty of West Texas from above.

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