



NORTH SAN ANTONIO
CHAMBER

Keeping Bexar County Strong.

Legislative Position

84th Legislative Session



North San Antonio Chamber of Commerce Legislative Position for the 84th Legislative Session concerning **transportation needs for the Alamo MPO Region.**

TRANSPORTATION

The North San Antonio Chamber of Commerce along with community and regional transportation advocates supports: 1) passage of new, long-term, sustainable funding sources for transportation infrastructure; and 2) the dedication of existing revenue generated from taxes, fees, or receipts related to transportation to the maintenance, improvement and expansion of roads, rail and public transportation.

Legislative solutions to Texas transportation needs could take many forms or approaches. We offer these suggestions as starting points:

1. **Dedicate All State Highway Fund Revenues to Transportation.** As recently proposed by Speaker Straus, end legislative diversions or appropriations from the State Highway Fund (Fund 6) for any purpose other than maintenance, improvement and expansion of transportation infrastructure.
2. **Dedicate Vehicle Sales Tax Revenue for Transportation.** Constitutionally dedicate a portion of the existing Sales and Use tax on new and used motor vehicles to transportation infrastructure.
3. **Support Additional Long-Term Dedicated Funding Sources.** There are other responsible and reasonable options available to legislators to provide long-term, dedicated sources of funding for needed transportation projects. These include raising and/or indexing the state's motor fuels tax (last adjusted in 1991), raising and/or indexing the vehicle registration fee, and establishing appropriate road user fees for electric and other alternatively powered vehicles. These measures would help restore and preserve the purchasing power of the State Highway Fund.
4. **Local Funding.** Provide cities and counties with additional local funding options and resources to address transportation needs that are not otherwise met by current funding sources or to offset any new transportation related costs or requirements by state or federal government.
5. **Increase Funding for Multi-Modal Transportation; Authorize Dedicated Transit Lanes and Preserve Governance Structure.** In order to assist VIA Metropolitan Transit's efforts to implement its Comprehensive Transportation Plan, we encourage: a) increasing services with dedicated transit lanes on shoulders and b) increasing funding opportunities for multimodal transit projects and c) preservation of the existing VIA Board governance.



North San Antonio Chamber of Commerce Legislative Position for the 84th Legislative Session concerning **the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) and the UT Health Science Center at San Antonio (UTHSCSA).**

EDUCATION, RESEARCH FACILITIES

UTSA - Endorsement of a Tuition Revenue Bond (TRB) bill for capital construction projects for public universities. UTSA seeks support for \$95 million in TRB's for a new Instructional Science and Engineering Building and \$42.5 million for the renovation of the 39-year-old Peter T. Flawn Science Building.

Instructional Science and Engineering Building:

At UTSA many science lab classes are taught in facilities built almost 40 years ago before the arrival of more modern safety, environmental, and security regulations. UTSA ranks as one of the top institutions in Texas in terms of classroom space utilization. With an Education and General (E&G) space deficit of approximately 1 million square feet, a new ISEB building would bring UTSA closer to State standards for instructional delivery in STEM fields. This new facility would provide class labs for biology, chemistry, physics and astronomy as well as classrooms and faculty. New classrooms and labs are critical for undergraduate instruction at UTSA.

Peter T. Flawn Science Building:

TRBs in the amount of \$42.5 million are needed to renovate the 39-year-old original Peter T. Flawn Science Building. The purpose of this renovation is to transform technologically obsolete laboratories that will be vacated upon completion of the ESIB building into state-of-the-art classroom spaces ensuring that UTSA's STEM teaching facilities reflect current technology, safety and security. This renovation and adaptive reuse will include a Learning Commons that will provide space and resources necessary to support STEM education outside the classroom. The Learning Commons will offer library resources, tutoring facilities and group study spaces designed to support teamwork and communications integral to the STEM curriculum. In addition, the Learning Commons in STEM education will also enhance UTSA's membership in the National Association of Research Libraries.

Texas Research Incentive program (TRIP):

Endorsement to increase Legislative funding from \$50 million to \$75 million for the existing Texas Research Incentive Program (TRIP) which provides competitive matching funds for eight emerging research institutions (from HB 51) to become Tier One.

UT HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER AT SAN ANTONIO

The North San Antonio Chamber of Commerce supports the following **funding priorities:**

- Enhanced formula funding for Health Related Institutions (HRI's)
- Enhanced Funding for Graduate Medical Education (GME)
- Maintain, enhance or secure new funding for Exceptional/Special Items:
- Barshop Institute for Longevity & Aging Studies, \$4 million
- Regional Campus Laredo, \$11.3 million
- San Antonio Life Sciences Institute (SALSI), \$4 million
- Authorization of Tuition Revenue Bonds (TRB) and Facilities & Renovations, \$114M*

* There is a critical need to renovate the oldest building, School of Medicine/School of Dentistry, and the original 40 year-old School of Nursing building, totaling 1.6 million square feet comprising about 40.7% of the campus space. Proposed renovations will support increased student enrollments and address major fire and life safety issues, including deferred maintenance. The projected cost for these renovations is \$130 million - \$114 million through an authorized TRB and UTHSCSA's investment of \$16 million to support this effort.



North San Antonio Chamber of Commerce Legislative Position for the 84th Legislative Session concerning **Port San Antonio and Brooks City Base.**

PORT SAN ANTONIO

Port San Antonio is the public entity created under provisions of Chapter 379b of the Texas Local Government Code to redevelop the 1,900 acre site of the former Kelly Air Force Base following its closure in 2001.

1. The North San Antonio Chamber **supports funding the State of Texas' Defense Economic Adjustment Assistance Grant Program** or the funding and creation of other programs that support and advance the redevelopment of closed military installations and the creation and retention of jobs otherwise lost when the installation closed.
2. We support Port San Antonio's **requested funding for improving, expanding, and building transportation infrastructure including roads, air facilities, and freight rail.**
3. Additionally, we support **funding for programs that positively impact water drainage, utility, road and other infrastructure needs** including efforts to expedite approval and funding for projects that are ready for development and that will return an immediate positive return for the communities in which the projects are proposed, supporting job creation, capital investment, and overall economic growth.

The North San Antonio also supports the following objectives of Port San Antonio:

- Port San Antonio supports efforts to align the Texas Gross Margin's Tax's definition of cost of goods sold to conform to the Federal Acquisition Regulations and thus make it more likely that high value service providers - including aerospace MRO providers, will bring and keep high paying careers in our community, neighborhood, and state.
- Port San Antonio supports the continuation of state incentives and programs that supplement local economic development strategies to recruit and retain employers and the high value jobs they bring.
- Efforts to enhance programs such as the Skills Development Fund and other state and federal education and workforce development programs through increased funding and administrative requirements more in line with employer and educator needs and operational requirements.
- Port San Antonio supports efforts to enhance opportunities for ensuring that vocational, technical, STEM, and other educational curricula are closely matched to changing industry needs and flexible enough to keep pace with industry advancements.
- Port San Antonio supports programs that provide for the articulation and recognition of college credits earned either through regular enrollment or enrollment in dual credit programs at all degree granting institutions.



BROOKS CITY BASE

In 2001, when the Brooks Development Authority (BDA) was formed to partner with the Air Force on the Brooks City Base Project, the Air Force departure was still unknown. Later, the San Antonio City Council designated BDA to help fill the void left by the Air Force's departure. The authority is a political subdivision of the State of Texas and a public entity which owns and maintains the 1,300-acre property now known as Brooks City Base.

Since 2002, Brooks City Base has served as a unique model for redevelopment due to its use of public-private partnerships to establish a vibrant mixed-use community, and catalyst for prosperity on the former Brooks Air Force Base.

Brooks City Base is located on the southeast side of San Antonio with ample room for growth, and is now home to 26 companies and nearly 3,000 employees with an average annual salary of \$50,000.

Currently there are 754 acres available for development on campus; however, unsalvageable buildings are hindering new development, adding costs for new projects, and limiting Brooks City Base's ability to incentivize investment. Additionally, vacant parcels require infrastructure improvements, including refurbishment of existing IT fiber optic networks, utilities, and multi-use pathways, in order to enhance connectivity within the campus and neighboring areas.

The North San Antonio Chamber supports the following "Funding Priorities" submitted by Brooks City Base:

1. **Grant Funding Tied to Economic Development for former Military Bases**

- A. Ask: funding vehicle for former military asset disposition and infrastructure development tied to economic development in communities that have been subject to BRAC.
- B. Implications: 40 structures on demolition schedule will give way to new development by freeing over 440,000 square feet, with a project total of \$6M. Brooks City Base also anticipates pursuing public funding for the extension of South New Braunfels Ave., a key arterial street through the property. The extension is expected to cost \$23M and will provide direct access from Brooks City Base to Loop 410, which will benefit the surrounding community by alleviating traffic along federal and state roads, including I-37 and Military Hwy. Additionally, the extension would allow for future business development along the area, providing for greater economic impact opportunities.

2. **Public Funding for Historic Preservation**

- A. Ask: funding vehicle to preserve former military assets with historic significance
- B. Implications: Historic sites at Brooks can serve as congregation spaces to celebrate military heritage. Planned rehabilitation will incorporate museum qualities to provide an educational environment as well as the following:
 - **School of Aerospace Medicine at Kennedy Circle** site dedicated by former President John F. Kennedy for research and trial of aerospace technology later used in "Man on the Moon Project." Presently, seven structures have been reserved to be retrofitted, and serve as the University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine.
 - **Lieutenant Sidney Brooks Gravesite Memorial** burial site for first native San Antonian to pass during pilot training on base.
 - **Hangar 9** the last remaining all-wooden WW1 hangar standing in its original location that is recognized in the National Register of Historic Places, National Historic Landmarks, National Historic Civil Engineering Landmarks, and the Texas State Historical Survey.



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