

## **EDITORIAL**

### **JOINT LAND USES AND JOINT CONCERNS**

**March 18, 2010**

**Bexar County develops partnerships with non-profit organizations in our efforts to improve this community. We also develop strong relationships with local governmental entities and public organizations. One of my strongest focal points as County Commissioner for Precinct 1 is not only development, it is preservation. With the support of my fellow Commissioners Court members, Bexar County is taking the lead in a proactive initiative to preserve and protect Lackland Air Force Base and its surrounding areas.**

**Bexar County, in cooperation with the City of San Antonio and Port San Antonio have begun a collaboration with Lackland AFB known as the Lackland Joint Land Use Study, or in simpler terms, the Lackland JLUS. This partnership is a research into how the purpose of Lackland and Port San Antonio, in their efforts to protect the safety and well being of our community, can in turn be protected. Residential neighborhoods and business owners must be mindful of land use plans, and how noise pollution issues and traffic issues can quickly compromise the daily functions of the military and its missions. Camp Bullis developed a huge problem regarding development and encroachment and because of the problems imposed on our military presence, I have strongly pursued efforts to avoid a similar situation with Lackland AFB.**

**When commercial or residential development occurs too close to the area in which training activities are conducted and too near an air field, the missions and daily operations of that military installation can be strongly compromised and the ability for the military to function is limited. The Lackland JLUS will focus on avoiding future land use conflicts while promoting positive development and investment into the community and neighborhoods.**

**The Lackland JLUS, as any other development effort that occurs in Precinct 1 must include one crucial element; community input. Next week will begin the first phase of a series of public community meetings that will be held throughout Precinct 1 to allow neighborhoods, schools, business owners, and anyone else active in their community, the opportunity to share their concerns and ideas as we move forward with the study of the how we all impact our military presence in Bexar County and how we can build better relationships with each other.**

**Bexar County encompasses what has become nationally known as “Military City USA” and as such, Lackland AFB opened its doors to call Bexar County its home more than 68 years ago when it established its mission to be the basic training installation for all enlisted members of the military for the Air Force, the Air Force Reserve Command, and the Air National Guard. Language skills, security, law enforcement, the working dog program, and combat arms have become the daily operations of Lackland’s training mission. Detailed**

**and skilled basic training for pilots is also a crucial mission at Lackland where they train in aviation expertise on the C-5s, F-16s, and now, soon to be the F-35 military aircraft.**

**Last week, I was proud to announce and support the military's efforts to phase in the new aircraft F-35s as they plan to retire the F-16s. Bexar County will luckily reap the benefits of this effort made possible by my brother, Congressman Ciro Rodriguez whose devotion to our military secured \$7.9 million to fund the improvements and upgrades for the aircraft maintenance building currently housed at the Kelly Annex Field. Congressman Rodriguez took the lead in preserving our military efforts in Bexar County at the federal level and I am proud to follow his leadership to take the lead at the local County level.**

**The positive economic developmental impact of Lackland is unmatched. It has more than 45,000 personnel and has positively impacted our local economy of approximately \$2 billion. Port San Antonio assists in the mission of Lackland in their operational oversight of the industrial area of the section formerly known as Kelly AFB. There is a multi-modal distribution center and aviation related companies at Port San Antonio.**

**Preservation is clearly necessary when it comes to the most sensitive areas of Bexar County and Precinct 1. The Lackland AFB and Port San Antonio area will continue to be one of my priorities. As we move forward with our public meetings and development of strategies to enhance the surrounding neighborhoods, I do look forward to receiving input from you; the community.**