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Bexar County awarded grant to help protect Joint Base San Antonio missions

The Texas Military Preparedness Commission announced at its meeting today that Bexar County and Joint Base San Antonio (JBSA) will receive a \$4.7 million grant through the Governor's Defense Economic Adjustment Assistance Grant (DEAAG) program. The money will be used to purchase 180 acres adjacent to JBSA - Randolph Air Force Base to protect the clear zone around the base's airfield.

"Bexar County has been working closely with our military leaders at Joint Base San Antonio and at the state to secure this very important grant," County Judge Nelson Wolff said. "It is a huge step forward in protecting Randolph's mission."

The funds from the Governor's Office will be matched by \$3,425,000 in Bexar County in-kind matching funds; \$1,350,000 in federal in-kind matching funds and \$1,287,500 in County cash matching funds for a total of \$10,775,000.

"This is a tremendous turnaround from two years ago, when we were faced with Air Force leadership looking at potentially relocating the missions at Randolph, to the community working together now to ensure that we mitigate encroachment and the bird hazard," said County Commissioner Tommy Calvert, whose Precinct 4 includes Randolph. "Everyone should be proud that we've proven once again we are Military County, USA."

With the 12th Flying Training Wing, JBSA-Randolph is one of the busiest airfields in the United States Air Force. The training wing's instructors prepare more than 2,200 flight training candidates across the Air Education and Training Command. Furthermore, Randolph Air Force Base is the sixth largest employer in Bexar County with an overall economic impact of \$1.15 billion.

The training mission at Randolph has been at risk because of the significant growth and development around the base. The incompatible growth could adversely affect the safety zone around the airfield at the end of two runways adjacent to the base, forcing the military to move the training wing.

“This grant will help strengthen our position as Military City USA and ensure the continued presence of a variety of essential training missions in San Antonio,” said San Antonio Mayor Ivy R. Taylor. “The military is one of our most important economic engines, but more importantly it is our responsibility as citizens to provide support to our armed forces so that they can function at the highest levels. Right now through our SA Tomorrow plan, we are developing a new tool kit to protect and preserve the viability of our military installations.”

Purchasing the 180 acres adjacent to the base will protect the Randolph’s mission by creating a safety zone of undeveloped land, and it will improve the quality of life for neighboring communities through noise abatement. The safety zone also will provide a level of certainty to the Air Force that encroachment will not jeopardize the mission of the base.

“We owe the Bexar County legislative delegation a lot of our thanks for this grant, which is so important to safeguarding JBSA-Randolph’s mission,” said District 9 City Councilman Joe Krier, tri-chairman of the Military Transformation Task Force. “Our state lawmakers worked tirelessly to help secure the \$30 million for the Governor’s Defense Economic Adjustment Assistance Grant program in last year’s legislative session.”

Diane Rath, Executive Director of the Alamo Area Council of Governments said: “This is fantastic news for Bexar County and our military community,” said Diane Rath, executive director of the Alamo Area Council of Governments. “As a fellow DEAGG recipient on a project assisting JBSA’s viability, we’re thankful for Gov. Abbott’s continued leadership in ensuring that San Antonio proudly retains its title of Military City, USA.”

"As San Antonio and its surrounding communities continue to grow, the increased development near/around all of Joint Base San Antonio's (JBSA) major locations (Randolph, Fort Sam Houston, Camp Bullis and Lackland) could pose potential impacts those critical missions. The City of San Antonio and its surrounding regional community leaders fully understand this fact ... and they are not just standing back allowing the planned growth to occur unconstrained. Instead, they are partnering with JBSA's senior military leaders and are at the forefront of working diligently to ensure compatible development and mitigation measures are in place to secure and protect JBSA's critical missions well into the future. Today, we had another major success in these efforts as our community leaders, led by Bexar County Commissioner Kevin Wolff, who secured this \$4.7M DEAGG grant that will go a long way in mitigating some of the potential development issues that could have impeded the flying and training mission of the 12th Flying Training Wing at JBSA-Randolph. All of us who wear the uniform are very grateful and appreciative of the incredible support that our Bexar County and surrounding community leaders forged in securing this DEAGG Grant that will be used to protect 12th Flying Training Wing's mission viability well into the future ... and its further proof of why this great city and region are known as Military City USA", said Brigadier General Bob LaBrutta, Commander of the 502nd Air Base Wing and Joint Base San Antonio.

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