



Building a Healthy Tomorrow

*A Strategic Sports Facility Development Plan for
San Antonio and Bexar County*

March, 2016

DRAFT

Contact: Suzy Gray

Director of Operations & Sports Facilities

sgray@sanantoniosports.org

210-820-2191



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair: **Carlos Ramos**
Regional Director, Customer Care
Coca-Cola Refreshments

Vanesia Y. Adkins
Sales Director
Humana, Inc.

Al Aguilar
Chairman/CEO
Creative Civilization

William Alberts
Vice President, Legal
Rackspace Managed hosting

April Ancira
Vice President
Ancira Auto Group

Brandon Arceneaux
Owner
Alamo Drafthouse Cinema

Gary Arthur

Luis Ayala
General Manager
Pepsi Beverages Company

Marco Barros
President & CEO
San Antonio Tourism Council

George Becknell
Insurance and Investment Planner

Dr. S. Josh Bell
Sports Medicine Surgeon
San Antonio Orthopaedic Group

Edward Belmares
Vice President
KFW Engineers & Surveying

George Block

Lisa Blonkvist, CIMA
Senior Vice President, Wealth Management
Morgan Stanley

Jim Bodenstedt
President
MUY! Pizza

Ryan Calong
Director National Accounts
Silver Eagle Distributing, Inc.

Mike Chapman
Executive Vice President/COO
Security Service Federal Credit Union

Jeff Conrad
Corporate Strategy
Rackspace

Ernest Cunningham
President & CEO
EC Ventures

Tom Cury
President & General Manager
KENS-TV

Sam Dawson
CEO
Pape-Dawson Engineers, Inc.

Charlie Ebrom
Vice President
Zachry Interests, Inc.

Joseph Gaughan
Partner, Assurance Services
Ernst & Young, LLP

Mike Gorman
Vice President Malt, South Texas
Glazer's

Dr. Clayton Hansen

Don Harris
Sports Director
WOAI-TV

Ben Hart
Owner
Factory of Champions

Janet Holliday
President/CEO
The CE Group

Lori Houston
Assistant City Manager
City of San Antonio

Patti Larsen
Area Manager, Constituency Relations
AT&T External & Legislative Affairs

Joe Linson
President
JEL & Associates

Dr. Esteban Lopez
Regional President
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas

Dick Lord
Sr. Vice President, Investments,
Merrill Lynch

Steve Markey
Managing Partner, CPA
Whitestone Wealth Management

Ray McCutcheon
Exec. Vice President, Advertising and
Marketing
San Antonio Express-News

Susan B. McGee
President, General Counsel
U.S. Global Investors, Inc.

Frank Miceli
Sr. Vice President, Sales & Marketing
Spurs Sports & Entertainment

Robert Ober
CEO & Founder
Robert Ober & Associates, Inc.

Richard Ojeda
Owner/CEO
Black Tie Affairs

Danny Oliver
Sr. Vice President, Marketing &
Business Development
NuStar Energy

Richard Oliver
Director of Communications
San Antonio Convention &
Visitors Bureau

Jonathan Owens
Partner, Assurance & Advisory
KPMG, LLP

Dr. Timothy S. Palomera
Sports Medicine Associates of
San Antonio

Robert Potter
Executive Vice President
Lone Star Capital Bank, NA

Dean Radla
General Manager
KABB/KMYS/WOAI

Bob Raymond
Regional Vice President of Sales
Dahill

Judy Rettinger
General Manager
Time Warner Cable Media Sales

Kate Rogers
Vice President, Partner
Communications & Engagement
H-E-B

Jeff Ruiz
General Manager, San Antonio Operations
Medtronic, Inc.

Tina Salazar
Supervisor/Owner
McDonald's Restaurants

Lou Simmons
Director of Sales, South Texas Region
AT&T Mobility

Jeff Skelton
Vice President & Managing Partner
Altamira Benefit Advisors

Richard W. Smith
Principal
ChapmanSchewe Benefits

Justin Steen
Chief Information Officer
Materials Handling Services

Robert K. Sugg
Partner
Strasburger

Dr. Julie L. Wiernik
Sport and Performance Psychologist
Texas Center for Sport Psychology

Brad Young
Director, Risk Management Division,
Southwest Business Corporation

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Bill Brendel
General Manager
The Crocket Hotel

Hank Brummett

Josh Davis
Olympian

Derrick Fox
President/CEO
Alamo Bowl

Kent Krauss

Joe Krier
Krier Consulting Group

Robert Marbut Jr.

Richard Perez
President & CEO
San Antonio Greater Chamber of Commerce

Steve Richards



ORGANIZATION STAFF

Russ Bookbinder
President/CEO

Janet Jendrzej
Executive Assistant

Dorsena Picknell
Director/Sponsorships

Carisa Heiss
Director/Development

Myrna Reyes
Manager/Special Events

Gretchen Garceau-Kragh
Grants Writer

Mary Ullmann Japhet
Senior Vice President/
Communications & Community
Engagement

Ross Davis
Director/Marketing

Bryan Lester
Graphic Designer

Carolyn Wheat
Manager/Public Relations

Mandy Adkins
Director/Youth Programs

Sara Huedepohl
Manager/Youth Programs

Sylvia Montemayor
Vice President/Finance & Administration

Joseph Segura
Manager/Accounting

David Voth
Vice President/ Events & Bids

Suzy Gray
Director/Operations & Sports Facilities

Tony Benke
Manager/ Volunteers/Coach Ed

Riley Walker
Manager/Events

OUR MISSION

To transform our community through the power of sport

OUR VISION

To have healthy kids, places to play and events that impact

OUR VALUES

Integrity...

Honoring our commitments
By being honest, accountable and demonstrating mutual respect

Excellence...

Exceeding expectations
By demonstrating dedication, discipline, and determination

Leadership...

Making a meaningful impact
By sharing our vision, compassion and inspiration

Teamwork...

Achieving a shared purpose
By maintaining commitment, trust and cooperation towards others

Passion...

Living our vision
By embracing our mission with pride, enthusiasm and desire

HISTORY

In 1984, a small group of sports enthusiasts who recognized that amateur sports could transform a community set about creating an independent nonprofit to do just that. Spurred by then-Mayor Henry Cisneros and supported in part by the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce, they created an independent nonprofit sports commission to bid on premier amateur athletic events. It was officially incorporated as the San Antonio Amateur Sports Foundation.

The 1989 AAU Junior Olympics was the Sports Foundation's first major event, followed by the 1993 U.S. Olympic Festival, the 1995 National Senior Olympics and the 1998 NCAA Final Four. Since then, the list of successful events has kept growing. Along the way, the Sports Foundation created *Dreams for Youth* to provide training in six Olympic sports for primarily disadvantaged children. Its youth initiatives have grown over the years to include the *Community Olympic Development Program*, the *Go!Kids Challenge™*, *i play! afterschool*, *Fit Family Challenge* and other sports and fitness programs for children and families. In 2009, the organization re-branded as San Antonio Sports.

Table of Contents

A Word From Our President	8
Executive Summary	9
General Overview	13
National / International Facilities	15
UT Sports Science Institute	
UTSA Athletic Complex and Recreation Facility	
National Swim Center	
Velodrome and Cycling Park	
Regional Outdoor Complexes	16
Multi-Field Soccer Complexes	
Baseball Complexes	
Little League Complex	
Regional Indoor Complexes	17
Neighborhood Fitness & Practice Facilities	18
Summary	19

March, 2016

Dear Municipal and County Leaders:

In 2006, San Antonio Sports presented a *Strategic Sports Facility Development Plan for San Antonio and Bexar County entitled Building a Healthier Tomorrow*. This plan was a direct result of the efforts of representatives from the City of San Antonio and Bexar County working alongside members of our own facilities task force. Their mission was to critically assess the then current athletic facilities in our community and to bring forth recommendations that would: 1.) positively benefit the physical health of our families, 2.) meet the demand for athletic facilities commensurate with our growth and, 3.) capitalize on the sports industry by developing competitive, quality facilities in order to attract sporting events that will have a positive effect on the local economy.

The plan recommended the development of four types or tiers of facilities. The first tier should have the ability to host national and international events, the second to host regional outdoor events, the third to host regional indoor sports, and the fourth to develop centers for neighborhood fitness and youth sports.

The results of this collaboration produced 13 Regional and National class athletic facilities in 12 different sports, through the city's 2007 and the county's 2008 bond elections. Of these 13 facilities, 11 of them were outdoor complexes. We still have major needs for indoor venues.

San Antonio Sports has continued to perform periodic reviews of both our facility priorities and opportunities; and the attached update to the 2006 plan is intended to stimulate and continue the community discussion about how we can build a healthier San Antonio, both physically and fiscally.

We are grateful for your leadership in meeting the ever-increasing needs to improve the health and wellness of our community. San Antonio Sports, as always, is committed to working with you now and in the future.



Russ Bookbinder
President & CEO
San Antonio Sports

Executive Summary

The first Facilities Assessment by the SAASF was done in 1984-85 by Ralph Bender, Joe Linson and Dr. Jesse DeLee. In 2007, San Antonio Sports was asked by the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce, the Mayor and the Bexar County Judge to create a twenty-year plan for the development of community sports facilities. The goal was to establish an inventory that will enable us to: 1.) attract major Olympic sporting events, 2.) capitalize on the amateur sports tournament market, and 3.) impact the overall health of the community.

San Antonio Sports embraced this charge and conducted outreach with potential stakeholders. As a result, San Antonio Sports arrived at four underlying assumptions. The first was that San Antonio was so deficient in its number of athletic facilities that no one sector (public, private, or nonprofit) could be expected to successfully remedy this problem on its own. This called for a major shift in community mindset and policy in support of collaborative partnerships.

The second was that local governmental entities have been historically excellent at building, but poor at maintaining athletic facilities. Typically these needs are overlooked during the budgetary cycle as funds are allocated towards those services that are seen as having a higher priority. Then, without the routine maintenance, the facility needs begin to accrue to the point where they are no longer manageable through the annual budget cycle. The only feasible funding option then becomes school, municipal or county bond elections. Bonds that should be used to increase our capacity have been historically used for deferred maintenance. Therefore, San Antonio Sports called for the development of non-municipal operations and maintenance models, where appropriate, for community sports facilities developed under this plan.

A third conclusion is that the plan should not look to simply meet the current needs, but should anticipate the continued growth of our community. San Antonio, as the seventh-largest city in the country, is also ranked the seventh fattest.¹ Our community suffers epidemics of ailments for which the prescription is regular exercise. Without adequate athletic and recreational facilities, our community is being denied the quality of life that it rightfully deserves. We can go from one of America's fattest cities to America's fittest city.

Finally, it is necessary to involve all local government entities. Each one has an ability or asset that when appropriately applied, can be instrumental in the success of any one project. It is important to keep in mind that participation levels should be appropriate to the type of facility that is being constructed. For instance, a project that is seeking to use the Hotel Occupancy Tax as a funding source for construction should be one that is guaranteed to return monies to that fund. Likewise, a project that seeks to utilize school district property for the benefit of

¹ Men's Health Magazine (2015). <http://www.menshealth.com/health/americas-10-fattest-and-leanest-cities>

community health should include an operational model that does not take money out of the classrooms.

In the past ten years, we have made significant progress by leveraging city, county and school district bonds with local nonprofit investments, but all four underlying assumptions remain frighteningly true today.

1. In spite of over \$80 million worth of facility investments, San Antonio and Bexar County remain far below the level of facilities per capita of our peer Texas cities. This deficit contributes significantly to the health and fitness crisis in our community.
2. With draconian budget cuts looming from Washington and the state capitol, the effects will be felt at the city, county and school district levels. There has been no time when our local governments have been less able to add staff and programs.
3. Throughout the “worst economy since the Great Depression” San Antonio and Bexar County continued to grow. We were consistently in the top five real estate markets throughout the recession², and growth is expected to return to “boom” levels as the economy continues to recover.
4. In these fragile times, all government sectors and economic sectors must be involved, and their strengths and weaknesses respected.

As such, San Antonio Sports is putting forth the following plan that meets the identified goals, while keeping the four underlying assumptions in mind. It calls for the construction of four tiers of facilities. They are the national/international facilities, regional outdoor complexes, regional indoor complexes, and neighborhood practice and fitness facilities. The foundation tier, neighborhood practice and fitness facilities, is the level where we can make the most significant impact on our community’s quality of life.

For the first time, the Strategic Facilities Plan includes a focus on Paralympic (formerly known as wheelchair) sports. With our rapidly growing community of wounded warriors staying in San Antonio after discharge from SAMMC, combined with the UIL’s growing focus on including Paralympic sports, this is both a major community need and a major economic opportunity.

In this draft, we have prepared recommendations on all four tiers. There are two (2) national/international facilities that have demonstrated the ability to meet local needs, as well as capitalize on significant economic opportunities.

They are:

1. UT Sports Science Institute
2. Velodrome, cycling and Paralympic center

We are also recommending the funding of three (3) regional outdoor complexes.

² Builder News, Feb. 17, 2009 http://www.builderonline.com/land/local-markets/the-healthiest-housing-markets-for-2009_o

1. 1 multi-field soccer complex in SE Bexar County;
2. 1 multi-field soccer complex in urban San Antonio; and
3. Completing the Missions Baseball Academy on the west side.

There are five (5) regional indoor complexes that have the ability to meet both local needs, as well as capitalize on the youth sports marketplace.

1. Basketball/volleyball complexes in NE and NW San Antonio;
2. A wrestling/mat sports center in NE Bexar County;
3. An indoor Olympic/Pan Am sports center that could grow our existing club base in sports like judo, air pistol and in-line hockey;
4. Demolishing and replacing the San Antonio Natatorium; and
5. Developing the first of three (3) Paralympic training and completion centers in Bexar County.

Our best opportunity to quickly change our community's health and fitness profile is to use existing resources to develop neighborhood practice and fitness facilities. These facilities are needed throughout our community, but are critical in our most at-risk neighborhoods. Neighborhood sports and fitness opportunities fall into three (3) main categories.

1. Linear parks;
2. School partnerships, like SPARKs (school parks), and community use of indoor gymnasium facilities at elementary schools; and
3. Upgrading and programming the city's outdoor swimming pool system.

In 2008, our community voted to extend the sales tax that is both acquiring and developing our linear park system inside the city limits. The 2008 County visitor tax extension provided the funding for 13.5 miles of renovation and renewal of the San Antonio River, both north and south of our downtown. Our biggest untapped opportunity is the upgrading and reuse of CPS easements.

CPS has power towers and easements running through nearly every neighborhood in Bexar County. These easements are frequently viewed as eyesores. Upgrading and reusing existing CPS easements as biking and jogging trails could turn eyesores into assets.

Expanded reuse would take four (4) proposed steps:

1. Rewriting future easement contracts to include hike and bike trail use, and renegotiating existing easement contracts in high-potential areas;
2. Mowing and leveling the easements to make them safe for running and biking;
3. Asphalt paving the trails; and
4. Installation of solar night lights to expand the use of the easements in the evenings during CST.

Reusing existing CPS easements would be the most inexpensive additions we could make to our linear parks and greenbelts. Step one only requires a decision to do so. There is no other impact we can make for so little cost.

Every neighborhood has an elementary school. Many have more than one, with both public and private schools serving many communities. Our goal (within 15 years) is to have every elementary school gym, playground and playing field open after school for community use.

Schools cannot do this on their own. A one-time, small (\$50,000) capital grant will be needed for minor conversion costs for after-school use. Community basketball, volleyball, soccer, and t-ball leagues can provide their own resources, coaching and equipment in return for facility access.

If each city councilperson and the Mayor, as well as each county commissioner and the County Judge, could give one grant per year in their district or precinct, we could dramatically improve the health and fitness profile of our community in 15 years.

All of these projects will provide expanded opportunities for participation in both sports and fitness, and will position our community to attract tournament sporting events that will significantly impact the local hospitality and tourism industries.

By taking these steps that strengthen our local economy, we will be building our capacity to make significant improvements at the neighborhood fitness level – the level that matters most to our individual qualities of life.

General Overview

The Sports Facility Strategic Development Plan is broken down into four (4) facility types or tiers. They are:

1. National / International Facilities,
2. Regional Outdoor Complexes,
3. Regional Indoor Complexes, and
4. Neighborhood Fitness and Practice Facilities.

Each one serves a specific niche while, at the same time, complements the others. For instance, the neighborhood practice facilities serve local teams that may later meet at a regional complex for city championships or even host a state or national championship.

In this section we will provide an outline of the entire plan, along with a synopsis of the first two tiers and the recommended facilities within each.

DRAFT

SPORTS FACILITY STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN: Community Sports & Fitness Facilities

March, 2016

I.	National/International Facilities	<u>Budget</u>
	A. UT Sports Science Institute	5.0m
	B. Velodrome, Cycling and Paralympic Center	20.0m
	Sub-total	25.0m
II.	Regional Outdoor Complexes	
	A. SE Soccer Complex at Brooks City Base	2.0m
	B. Urban Soccer Complex at Laddie Place II	2.0m
	C. Missions Baseball Academy	5.0m
	Sub-total	9.0m
III.	Regional Indoor (multi-sport) Complexes	
	A. Indoor Sport Facilities	
	1. School sports	
	a. NE 6 Basketball/12 Volleyball in partnership with UIW	20.0m
	b. NW 6 Basketball/12 Volleyball in partnership with UTSA	20.0m
	c. NE Wrestling/Mat sports complex	<u>10.0m</u>
	2. Non-school, Olympic/Pan-Am sports	
	a. Judo	2.5m
	b. Air Pistol	0.5m
	c. In-line Hockey	1.0m
	3. Demolishing and replacing the San Antonio Natatorium	15.0m
	Sub-total	69.0m
IV.	Neighborhood Practice and Fitness Facilities	
	A. Linear Parks: Recreation and Fitness focus	
	1. City (^w /sales tax projects ongoing)	
	2. County (^w /river bond projects ongoing)	
	3. CPS easements	
	B. School Partnerships: team and fitness focus (annual matching grant program)	
	Indoor/Outdoor, Multi-sport, Secured	
	1. 1/year/city council district	0.5m/yr
	2. 1/year/county commissioner's precinct	<u>0.2m/yr</u>
	Sub-total	0.7m/yr

I. National/International Facilities

These facilities must be designed and built to be capable of hosting large national and international events. All aspects of the competition area, as well as the amenities, will meet the quality and regulatory standards for international athletics. Funding for these facility types will require significant public investments and, therefore, must return significant tourist dollars and taxes back to the local economy.

UT Sports Science Institute

During the 2003 78th State Legislature, Regular Session, the Sports Science Institute was initially funded and established to provide a state-mandated coaching education program for interscholastic coaches in Texas. The Institute will emphasize coaching techniques, sport physiology, sport psychology and sport management along with training on other relevant subjects and skills. It will also serve as a research center in sport and exercise sciences. In conjunction with the UT Health Science Center, it will provide a facility for diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of sports injuries. The Institute will establish San Antonio as the center of fitness and human performance research in the State of Texas.

The development of this facility will positively impact our local economy by providing high-paying, higher education research and teaching positions. It will also mean a continuous stream of coaches from throughout the state seeking to be certified or to obtain continuing education credits in the sports industry. This translates into out-of-town dollars being brought into the local hospitality and retail industries year-round.

Integrating the Institute as the academic centerpiece of the UTSA Athletic Complex will provide significant leverage to both projects.

Velodrome, Cycling Park and Paralympic Center

A velodrome is an oval-shaped bicycle racing track. Although the lengths may vary, the standard competition length is 250 meters. Velodromes can be constructed of wood, concrete or asphalt. In addition to bicycle track racing, velodromes can also accommodate rollerblading, skateboarding, walking or running.

Competitive track racing is a major attraction of the Summer Olympic Games and is gaining popularity in the United States. At the present time, there are only twenty-two velodrome tracks in the country with three of them in Texas (Houston, Frisco, Austin). Constructing one in San Antonio will create an opportunity to host regional, state and national cycling events and competitions.

Paralympic sports are assuming a new profile in our community both at the adult and youth levels. At the adult level, many wounded warriors are making San Antonio home after their discharge from SAMMC. All of these men and women need competitive sports as a part of their therapy and rehabilitation. Many can become participants in the (VA-sponsored) Valor Games or even the Paralympic Games, held immediately after the Olympics, every 4 years.

At the youth level, the UIL has begun the process of gradually introducing Paralympic sports in to UIL competition. None of our local school districts have adequate practice facilities and there are no Paralympic-specific competition facilities in Texas. A Paralympic Training/Competition Center could begin to fill a growing community need, as well as provide a sports tourism boost in the Paralympic niche.

The Valor Club at the site of the old Pecan Valley golf course is the preferred site for the construction of this facility. Its location at the end of the Salado Creek Greenway makes it a perfect destination or trailhead starting point. By placing a sport venue on the south side of San Antonio, we will be bringing an economic opportunity not historically available on the south side, while offering a safe venue for bicycling, skateboarding, rollerblading, walking and running.

The infield of the Velodrome is an ideal location for Paralympic (formerly known as wheelchair) sports. Multiple sports can be set-up simultaneously for practices, while duplicate courts can be set up for tournament play. The area underneath the track can be finished as weight rooms, training rooms, locker rooms, etc.

II. Regional Outdoor Complexes

A regional outdoor complex is one that has the ability to host a large to moderate-sized tournament, featuring teams from across the city, state, nation or even internationally. It should feature multiple playing fields meeting international regulatory standards for the sport for which they are designed. Amenities should be adequate for projected participant and spectator needs, and readily accessible. In order to be efficient, these amenities should be centralized in the complex.

The benefit of multi-field complexes is that they will enable our existing sports leagues to organize frequent tournaments. These events attract large numbers of amateur teams and have a positive impact on the local hospitality and retail industries.

In general, the ideal partnership model for these facilities might involve city or county governments, school districts, non-profit sports leagues, and foundations or other donors. For example, the acquisition of land and the construction of

infrastructure might be handled by the local municipal or county government. The operations and programming of the facility might be run by a qualified nonprofit sports organization. For long-term maintenance and operations of the facility, it is suggested that private investors or a community non-profit assume that role.

Municipal and county budgets are all too often stretched very thin just trying to deliver basic services to the community. Regular maintenance of recreation and athletic facilities are usually among the lowest of priorities when a policymaker is faced with having to make cuts. As a result, facilities are left to decay into a state where they are no longer competitive or desirable. Allowing this to happen not only diminishes the amateur sport enthusiast's ability to play, but it also adversely affects the ability to host economically-beneficial tournaments.

Multi-Field Soccer Complexes

San Antonio, as one of the larger cities in Texas, has more than 12,000 registered youth soccer players. It is a sport that has grown significantly in the United States and now exceeds football and baseball youth programs³. However, in spite of our investment after the 2008 County visitor tax extension election, when compared to Austin, Dallas and Houston, we have the fewest soccer complexes for public use, and none in SE Bexar County.

San Antonio Sports proposes the upgrade of the soccer complex in southeast San Antonio at Brooks City Base and the finish-out for the soccer complex at Laddie Place II.

Youth and Senior Baseball Complex

Youth baseball complexes were built, renovated and expanded in NE, SE, and SW Bexar County with the proceeds of the 2008 County bond election. One facility, the Missions Baseball Academy, was only 50% funded. This has significantly restricted the size and number of tournaments that San Antonio can host. Since the land has already been acquired and the infrastructure completed, funding the completion for the Missions Baseball Academy site is our best opportunity for a quick, major impact in sports tourism in that niche.

III. Regional Indoor Complexes

A regional indoor complex is one that has the ability to host a large to moderate-sized tournament, featuring teams from across the city, state, nation or even internationally. It should meet international regulatory standards for the sport for which they are designed. Amenities should be adequate for projected

³ ESPN.go.com, July 16, 2013 http://espn.go.com/espn/story/_/id/9469252/hidden-demographics-youth-sports-espn-magazine.

participant and spectator needs, and readily accessible. In order to be efficient, these amenities should be centralized in the complex.

The indoor complexes will host sports in which schools commonly participate, such as **basketball, volleyball, wrestling and swimming**. It will also host Olympic sports not traditionally found in schools, such as: **fencing, judo, air pistol, indoor soccer, and in-line hockey**.

We are recommending the development of two (2) basketball/volleyball complexes (NE, NW); one (1) wrestling/mat sport complex in NE Bexar County; one (1) Olympic/Pan Am indoor sports complex on or near Loop 410; and the demolition and rebuilding of the San Antonio Natatorium.

IV. Neighborhood Fitness & Practice Facilities

Establishing neighborhood practice and fitness facilities can have the most profound impact on our quality of life. By providing accessible venues for families to exercise and participate in team athletics, we will make great strides towards becoming one of America's fittest cities.

This category includes paths for walking, jogging and biking; practice fields for soccer, baseball, and softball; and multi-sport indoor facilities for basketball and volleyball. These venues can be located in linear parks and utility easements, as well as on public housing or school property.

San Antonio Sports recommends immediately beginning a four-step process for accessing and upgrading CPS easements all over our community by:

1. Rewriting future easement contracts to include hike and bike trail use, and renegotiating existing easement contracts in high-potential areas;
2. Mowing and leveling the easements to make them safe for running and biking
3. Installing asphalt paving for the trails
4. Installing solar night lights to expand the use of the easements in the evenings during CST.

Most important, however, is the use of neighborhood elementary schools as community sports and fitness centers after school. Each city council representative and the Mayor, as well as each county commissioner and the County Judge, should give one grant per year in their district or precinct to provide the capital costs of adapting schools for after-school community use. Community non-profits will provide the coaching and equipment needed for each activity.

Summary

San Antonio is a community that has a negative distinction of being one of the fattest cities in the United States. Our current inventory of athletic facilities is evidence of our failed commitment to an active and healthy lifestyle. As the number one tourist destination in the State of Texas, we are missing out on the economic benefits of being a major amateur sports destination.

This sports facility strategic plan, *Building a Healthy Tomorrow*, is meant to serve as a blueprint for our leaders today and beyond. If followed, it will transform us into a fit community. It is unique in that it can simultaneously improve our city's health profile and economic development.

The Sports Facilities Strategic Plan will always be a work in progress. San Antonio Sports continuously evaluates both community needs and opportunities. Hence, the Sports Facilities Strategic Plan will remain dynamic.

This plan presents projects and operational models that will thoroughly benefit San Antonio. Ideally, through a collaborative effort, we will create neighborhood fitness centers at local elementary schools. Through our regional sports facilities we will become an amateur sports destination. Our reputation as a host to Olympic and NCAA sporting events will be solidified because of our national and international level competitive facilities.

These facilities will not be built until we make a major community-wide commitment to health and fitness. We must embrace this vision and dedicate ourselves to it. We must find the will to do it and the fortitude to see it through.