

Case for Support

1968 was a transformative year in our nation's history, shaped by challenging tragedy and exhilarating triumph. It was the year HemisFair—the 1968 World's Fair—was held in the heart of downtown San Antonio, Texas. A 20th Century coming of age opportunity for our city, HemisFair was an exciting time marked by the confluence of the many cultures that have formed San Antonio and South Texas. On the day that the theme structure of the fair, the 622-foot Tower of the Americas, raised its observation deck to the top, schools rang their bells and drivers honked their horns in celebration. Children delighted in monorail rides with their families and were amazed by displays of “futuristic camera phones” and a replica of Da Vinci's *Flying Machine*. These were among the many worldly wonders that opened minds and inspired dreams.

Decades later, San Antonians have come together to revitalize the center-city asset into a thriving district bursting with energy. The vision of the *21st Century HemisFair*, as developed with extensive input from the San Antonio community, is a series of beloved urban parks that are embraced by a vibrant and walkable neighborhood. HemisFair is becoming an urban oasis that improves the quality of life for San Antonians and is celebrated by the whole community. In a vote of confidence, the City of San Antonio has dedicated considerable funds to the redevelopment project. Like other major civic endeavors, the 18-acre HemisFair project also requires robust philanthropic support to ensure its success. Thus, the HemisFair Conservancy was born.

Great cities have great downtowns, and great downtowns have great urban parks. Research consistently indicates that urban parks provide direct benefits such as community revitalization, civic engagement, and neighborhood safety. Parks enhance the natural environment, help children learn, improve public health and wellness, stimulate arts and cultural programs, and reduce our carbon footprint. Over time, HemisFair will become the central gathering place for all of San Antonio. This is critical for our city which, according to The Trust for

Public Land, ranks 56th out of America's 60 most populous cities in terms of the percentage of the population that has walkable park access.

When people have access to parks, they exercise more. In a city that is fighting valiantly to overcome its struggles with obesity, hypertension, and type 2 diabetes, there could be no better prescription than increased opportunities for physical activity, engaging programming, and an abundance of new amenities to encourage park-goers to stay all day. Additionally, Hemisfair is reconnecting the surrounding neighborhoods with accessible streets and pathways, offering ample shade, sustainable water features, and more parking options. Tremendous care has gone into designing park spaces that exceed accessibility criteria, ensuring Hemisfair will be a place for people of all ages and abilities to relax, play, learn, exercise, celebrate, dine, interact and, above all, be inspired.

With dreams of plazas, courtyards, green space, commissioned art installations and cultural amenities, residences and local businesses, Hemisfair will mature San Antonio's city center asset into a collective space bustling with both residents and visitors. The connectivity provided by Hemisfair will meet the residents' desire for genuine vibrancy in the urban core, the effects of which will ripple throughout the city. San Antonio is teeming with non-profits benefiting children, veterans, people with disabilities and many more beneficiaries, all of whom are invited to conduct their important activities at Hemisfair.

Downtown parks also act as powerful economic generators for the entire city while increasing property values and municipal revenues. The economic impact of Hemisfair's redevelopment will be tremendous for San Antonio. The district will increase the current number of downtown residents by 50%, add 3000 parking spaces, and triple the amount of usable park acreage. Vibrant urban districts attract and retain young, educated professionals, encourage new business development, and funnel millions in revenue to the surrounding neighborhoods and businesses. While the Conservancy provides necessary funds to redevelop Hemisfair, it is also instrumental in ensuring the district becomes financially self-sustaining.

There are three phases of redevelopment at Hemisfair, all authentic to San Antonio, but each with its own unique design and planned to meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Neighborhood Development standards. The first, which opened in October 2015, is located at the southwest corner of Hemisfair and is currently named Yanaguana Garden (“Yanaguana” comes from the native Payaya language meaning “spirit waters”). Within 10 weeks of opening, over 100,000 people visited the park; they came from 48 zip codes and six countries. Yanaguana Garden is a beautifully landscaped outdoor wonderland for people of all ages and abilities. Children dig in sand and cool off on a water splash pad, while adults play games like ping pong or bocce ball over drinks in the shade. In the evening, the park is beautifully lit, inviting people to dine and socialize at one of the lively outdoor eateries operating out of a preserved historic home.

The second phase, Civic Park, will be the front porch of San Antonio. It will be the grandest of Hemisfair’s park series, boasting impressive open public space for community gatherings of up to 12,000 people. Inviting stretches of green will welcome people to enjoy a cup of coffee or a morning yoga class, with the beautiful backdrop of the downtown skyline. An interconnected succession of bustling plazas and charming courtyards will become favorite destinations for people-watching and exploring. Culinary festivals, live music, and performances of all kinds will fill the calendar and offer San Antonians recreational activities like never before. Whether it is a large-scale event, a pick-up Frisbee game, or a family picnic, there will be something for everyone. Scheduled to open to the public in 2018, the Civic Park will celebrate San Antonio’s tri-centennial and the 50th anniversary of the World’s Fair.

The third phase will be Tower Park—a neighborhood lawn at the base of the Tower of the Americas. It is not yet in the design process but is projected to open in 2020.

Each phase of Hemisfair’s redevelopment will incur capital costs including but not limited to: design, construction, installation, materials, inspection, supervision, signage, legal fees, furniture, fixtures, and equipment. Benchmarking efforts have indicated the need to generate long-term funding solutions to sustain operations and maintenance (O & M) within the parks; therefore, the Conservancy is proactively seeking philanthropic funding for both capital costs as well

as an endowment to sustain the parks for generations so the district thrives and matures gracefully. The Conservancy is also implementing best practices for gift cultivation, solicitation and stewardship to inspire a new generation of philanthropists to give generously and strategically.

Capital costs for Yanaguana Garden exceeded \$8.8M; the projected budget for ongoing O & M is in excess of \$1M per year. Estimated capital costs for the Civic Park are \$60M; early cost projections for Tower Park suggest it will be \$20M. All phases of redevelopment have and will continue to include public outreach since HemisFair belongs to everyone!

Donors have the opportunity to be part of the project on a variety of levels and there are myriad volunteer opportunities. The HemisFair Conservancy helps meet the district's ongoing O & M needs by providing funding from multiple sources to include philanthropic naming opportunities. A multi-faceted fundraising platform will ensure funding for HemisFair, independent of City budget priorities or changes in civic leadership. The Conservancy seeks contributions of all sizes and encourages all residents to invest in their parks. These sources of funding, in addition to funds raised by the HemisFair Park Area Redevelopment Corporation through long-term ground leases, a Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone, and a parking benefit district, will allow the district to be financially self-sustaining by 2022.

The roots of HemisFair's history run deep. To reach its full potential, San Antonio needs investment in its urban oasis. Furthermore, to create, activate, and sustain the magnitude of this 21st Century world-class park district, the Conservancy must garner generous contributions from a broad variety of individual donors, family foundations, corporations and other grant-making sources.

Your support of the Conservancy will help shape our city and inspire our future ... with your help the bells can ring again for San Antonio!

For more information, please contact:
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