

TEAM ELPASO TRIP TO WASHINGTON D.C.
October 4 – 9 2009

Every October the Greater El Paso Chamber of Commerce organizes a trip to Washington D.C. to coordinate with the annual Association of United States Army (“AUSA”) Convention. The AUSA Annual Meeting is the largest land power exposition and professional development forum in North America. The three-day event also includes over 500 industry and military exhibits occupying 500,000 square feet of exhibit space. Each year over 30,000 attendees, including senior leaders from the Army, DoD and Congress, as well as foreign dignitaries.

For our community a major highlight of the convention was the **designation of Fort Bliss as the Center for Renewable Energy for the Department of Defense**. Fort Bliss, with some assistance from the City of El Paso acting through the department of Economic Development, Public Service Board and the Convention and Visitors Board operated booth to highlight the unique qualities of the region that make it ideal for research and development of sustainable energy projects. A copy of the tri-fold distributed at the booth is attached. The focus on Ft. Bliss as the center for renewable energy will yield numerous economic development opportunities for the El Paso Region. The City of El Paso will be working closely with the federal government, the State of Texas, County government, UTEP, NMSU, EPCC and private sector partners to maximize the opportunities the designation brings. Congressman Reyes has requested that the region address this opportunity in the same manner as BRAC. A regional plan should be adopted and all stakeholders fully engaged for a common goal.

AUSA draws many industry leaders so each year REDCO takes advantage of the fact they are all gathered in one locale to set up meetings so the Mayor and Congressman Reyes can assist in the recruiting efforts to attract new industry to the area or encourage those with a presence in the region to expand their operations and investment. One day is set aside for those meetings. Attached you will find a copy of the briefing materials provided to industry representatives.

REDCO also sets up meeting with Army leadership to allow the Mayor and Congressman an opportunity update them on the progress the community has made in preparing for the growth at the installation. The community efforts have been so impressive that the DoD has invited the Mayor to participate as a presenter in the annual Growth Communities Conference to be held in November to tell about the El Paso success story.

In addition to the activities at the convention center the Chamber of Commerce and Congressman Reyes’ staff set up meetings for the Chamber volunteers and City staff on the trip with federal agencies, legislative staff and members of the delegation. This year Team El Paso included 5 members of Chamber of Commerce staff, 20 community volunteers (private sector individual) and 4 City of El Paso representatives.

Finally, every year at the conclusion of AUSA and Chamber visits, the City's Federal lobbyists set up meetings for the Mayor and City staff with agencies and members of congress who serve on committees with projects of importance to the City of El Paso Federal Legislative Agenda. This year the focus was transportation and public safety. Police Chief Greg Allen and Fire Chief Otto Drozd joined the Mayor on Thursday and Friday for important meetings with potential funding sources. Attached you will find a copy of the meeting schedule and the name of the city representative in attendance in each of the meetings. For the Chamber meetings Monday through Wednesday the City person was part of the greater group organized by the Chamber.