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## Brooks City Base hotel expected to spur further South San Antonio development

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Brooks City Base officials have worked for years to help move a \$35 million Embassy Suites hotel project from the drawing board to dirt-turning. In April, construction crews will break ground on the landmark project, which is expected to draw additional investment to San Antonio's Southeast Side.

There is no full-service hotel south of downtown, Brooks City Base CEO and President Leo Gomez said.

"That leaves a big void for the surrounding community that quite frankly should have been filled long ago," he said.

**Phoenix Hospitality Group** will be the developer and property manager for the project — to be known as the Embassy Suites-Brooks City Base by Hilton Hotel. The San Antonio company has worked with Brooks City Base since 2013 to try and bring the project to fruition.

"The challenge has been to convince developers and banks that a full-service hotel — with a ballroom, meeting rooms and a restaurant — can be



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Work on the \$35 million Embassy Suites-Brooks City Base by Hilton Hotel is slated to begin in April.

supported by the (South Side) market," Gomez said. "In this case, the developer actually went through the expense and effort, along with Brooks City Base, to complete a feasibility study, which was then used to develop the proposed pro forma and financing plan. Hilton reviewed that and rewarded what they saw with our franchise agreement."

The Brooks City Base hotel will be built on a 6-acre site at South New Braunfels Avenue and Southeast Military Drive. It will have about 155 suites and about 8,000 square feet of conference and event space.

The hotel also will house a fitness center, a business center, a full bar and a Grab & Go deli market. It's scheduled to open in 2016.

Brooks City Base officials predict that the Embassy Suites project will trigger other development opportunities and could attract larger employers to the area.

"Our goal is to attract more and better-paying jobs to the Brooks area, and one critical strategy for doing that is to develop a strong mixed-use section within our land-use plan to serve essentially as our own town center," Gomez said. "Having a full-service hotel the quality of an Embassy Suites by Hilton to anchor that mixed-use development will attract additional retail and restaurants to the area. That will make the Brooks City Base campus even more attractive to potential major employers."

Ed McClure, founder and CEO of Phoenix Hospitality Group, said the hotel is a "visionary project" that will "forever change" San Antonio's South Side.

**W. Scott Bailey**

Reporter/Project Coordinator  
*San Antonio Business Journal*

