



U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

**NEWS RELEASE**  
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## **Historic theater on Fort Sam Houston to gain new life under \$16.9 million BRAC renovation and expansion project**

**FORT WORTH, TEXAS** – After sitting vacant for more than two decades, one of the first dedicated movie theaters built by the U.S. Army in the United States is about to begin a journey back in time. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District has awarded a \$16.9 million contract to RKJ Construction, Inc. to renovate and build an addition to the 75-year old main post theater on Fort Sam Houston. RKJ is based in Lampasas, Texas.

The building will become the new home of the Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation Command's (FMWRC) Army Entertainment Division, which is relocating to Fort Sam Houston from Fort Belvoir, Virginia as part of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) mandates. This division stages a touring musical production called the U.S. Army Soldier Show, featuring active duty soldiers who are selected by audition from throughout the Army. The renovated 14,700 square foot theater will serve as the rehearsal hall for the cast of the annual production, while an 18,000 square foot addition will provide space for offices, recording studios, and equipment storage.

The project will alter the building's original movie theater configuration to accommodate theatrical productions. The work will involve extending the existing stage and modifying the rear portion of the building to incorporate the 80-foot-tall rigging necessary to raise and lower stage sets. The balcony seating will be removed to make room for lighting and sound equipment, reducing the theater's seating capacity from 1,100 to 800.

Many of the theater's architecturally distinctive elements will be retained as part of the renovation effort. The theater was built in 1935 in a Spanish Colonial Revival style with a white stucco exterior, arched entryways, and a bell tower reminiscent of Spanish missions. The building's historic appearance and character will remain intact through the preservation of a number of features, including original light fixtures, wooden banisters, exterior lamp posts, the heavy wooden front doors, carved wooden ceiling beams, frescoes and wall murals, and the original ticket booth in front of the main entrance. Plans also call for replica film posters to be mounted on the interior walls when the project concludes. The project is expected to be finished by the fall of 2011.

This contract is one of 26 that are expected to be awarded in fiscal year 2010 for BRAC and other military construction projects in San Antonio. The projected value of these contracts exceeds \$390 million. During the past two fiscal years, contracts worth almost \$2 billion have been awarded through the San Antonio BRAC and military construction program. The construction contractors that receive contracts continue to hire many subcontractors from the San Antonio area to help complete their projects.

The rapid pace of construction has put the San Antonio BRAC program on track to complete several projects in 2010. By the end of the fiscal year in September, it is anticipated that more than 20 facilities will have been made ready to begin supporting military missions and personnel that are coming to San Antonio from other parts of the country.

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**About BRAC in San Antonio:** The San Antonio BRAC construction program will provide the facilities to accommodate thousands of military personnel, federal employees, and military missions that are moving to and within the city as a result of the 2005 BRAC mandates. Construction work is scheduled to take place across San Antonio at Fort Sam Houston, Camp Bullis, Lackland and Randolph Air Force Bases through September 2011. The program involves building and renovating as many as 78 major facilities that amount to more than six million square feet of space. The total cost of BRAC and BRAC-related construction is projected to exceed \$2 billion. The BRAC projects, however, are part of a larger, ongoing military construction program in San Antonio, which encompasses roughly \$3 billion of projects that represent more than 10 million square feet of space.

Representatives of the Army Corps of Engineers are working on the San Antonio BRAC construction program as members of the Joint Program Management Office, which oversees BRAC project design and construction. The JPMO is a joint military service entity that represents a partnership between the Corps, the Air Force Center for Engineering and the Environment and the Naval Facilities Engineering Command, and is supported by private sector contractors.

**About the Fort Worth District:** The Fort Worth District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was established in 1950. The District is responsible for water resources development in two-thirds of Texas, and design and construction at all military installations in Texas and parts of Louisiana and New Mexico. Visit the Fort Worth District Web site at: [www.swf.usace.army.mil](http://www.swf.usace.army.mil).

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