

**The Texas A&M University System
Board of Regents - Thursday, 08 August 2019**

Remarks

Dr. M. Katherine Banks

Vice Chancellor of Engineering and National Laboratories

- **In October 2017, the Department of the Army announced its intent to create a “new command” that will modernize the battlefield.**
- **Many cities in multiple states were originally considered.**
- **Ultimately, Austin was chosen as headquarters for the Army Futures Command. The Texas A&M System contributed to the decision by collaborating on the site-selection proposal.**
- **The establishment of Army Futures Command marks one of the most significant Army reorganization efforts since 1973, and the A&M System is a part of it.**

- **AFC Commanding General Mike Murray plans to address the Army’s most pressing problems at the “speed of relevance.”**
- **One way to accomplish this goal is a soldier-inspired research approach, which we refer to as the “iterative design process.”**
- **The A&M System will provide the ecosystem required to accelerate research and technology-development across what is known as the “Valley of Death,” where technologies typically die or stall.**
- **Chancellor Sharp’s remarkable vision for the RELLIS campus aligns with General Murray’s plan by transforming our 2,000-acre campus into a living laboratory. With the support of our A&M System Regents, we will develop a comprehensive complex unlike any other in the nation.**

- **Texas A&M will provide:**
 - **Innovation hubs for agile technology evaluation;**
 - **Rapid feedback on system integration and performance;**
 - **Technology development sprints; and**
 - **Opportunities for private industry investment**
- **The complex at RELLIS is more than just one building.**
- **It is a full *complement* of facilities, equipment and instrumentation unmatched anywhere.**
- **For example, Texas A&M will be *the* hypersonics research capital of the country with the planned construction of a “Ballistic, Aero-optics and Materials” facility, which we call BAM, along with our Mach-6 quiet tunnel and our new laser-diagnostics laboratory.**

- **BAM will consist of an above ground tunnel that is one-kilometer long and two-meters-in-diameter with integrated sensors. It will be used for hypersonics and directed energy research. BAM will be one of a kind.**

- **In addition to BAM's use by Army Futures Command, it will be available to other military branches and defense contractors.**

- **I will now focus my comments on the first two components featured here:**
 - **the Innovation Proving Ground, or IPG**
 - **and, the Research Integration Center, or RIC, which is shown in your agenda item as the Innovative Technologies Development Complex (ITDC) project.**

- **First, the Innovation Proving Ground includes all of RELLIS, as you can see highlighted here.**
- **We owe a great deal of gratitude to the State of Texas and our state legislators for approving a \$50 million investment for IPG instrumentation.**
- **The Innovation Proving Ground will provide a challenging outdoor test-site for autonomous aerial, ground and subterranean vehicles. The systems involved are highly complex with networks and sensors using innovative operating approaches. Because of the integrated instrumentation and land area, a test-site like this is unique.**

- **Second, the A&M System has allocated a total of \$80 million to construct the Research Innovation Center. It will be a state-of-the-art innovation hub where researchers, students, industry, government and the military can collaborate to create emerging technologies that will modernize the Army.**
- **The use of high-tech maker spaces will lead to product development that is tested and evaluated by soldiers allowing for continual and real-time design feedback.**
- **The target date for completion of both Innovative Proving Ground and Research Innovation Center is June 2021.**

- **This complex at RELLIS is a generational change. The decision that you make today about this investment will impact not only us, but also support our national security efforts for decades to come.**
- **Thank you for your support and I will be happy to answer any questions.**