Government of BELIZE

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PRESS RELEASE

Investing in the Future of San Pedro: A New Airport for a Growing Island

Belmopan, November 3, 2026.

The Government of Belize recognizes the importance of the ongoing discussion regarding the proposed development of a new airport to serve San Pedro and Ambergris Caye. We welcome the views of all stakeholders, including our valued airline partners with whom we have begun the discussion, residents, businesses, and visitors who depend on reliable and efficient air transportation.

The current airport has served San Pedro with distinction for many years. However, it was developed at a time when passenger volumes, aircraft movements, tourism arrivals, and urban development were significantly lower than they are today. With continued growth in both the resident population and visitor arrivals, the facility is approaching its operational capacity, creating increasing challenges related to aircraft movements, passenger processing, expansion opportunities, and long-term safety planning. As the island continues to grow, it is important that infrastructure keeps pace with the demands of a modern and expanding community.

The proposal for a new airport is therefore not a response to current failure, but rather an initiative taking response to future demand.

The Government and the Belize Airport Authority’s objective is clear: to develop aviation infrastructure capable of supporting San Pedro's growth over the next several decades while enhancing safety, efficiency, connectivity, and economic opportunity.

A modern airport would provide:

- Greater operational capacity to accommodate future passenger growth;
- Improved airside and terminal infrastructure to support more efficient aircraft and passenger operations;
- Enhanced aviation safety through modern design standards and expanded operating areas;
- Increased resilience during emergencies and natural disasters;
- Better opportunities for connectivity and tourism expansion; and
- New investment, employment, and business opportunities for Belizeans.

Importantly, the development of a new airport in San Pedro forms part of the Government's wider vision to modernize national transportation infrastructure, strengthen Belize's tourism product, attract investment, and ensure sustainable economic growth across the country.

The Government/BAA recognizes the concerns that have been expressed regarding the eventual closure of the existing airport. Those concerns are understandable and deserve thoughtful consideration. Any transition would be undertaken only through careful planning, consultation, and coordination with airlines, regulatory authorities, businesses, and the people of San Pedro.

This conversation should not be viewed as a debate between development and preservation, nor between government and airline operators. Rather, it is about ensuring that the infrastructure serving San Pedro can meet the needs of future generations while maintaining the highest standards of safety, reliability, and service.

San Pedro's remarkable success as a destination has created new opportunities and new responsibilities. The Government believes that planning today for tomorrow's needs is the best way to secure continued prosperity for residents, businesses, and visitors alike. The proposed new airport is ultimately an investment in the future of Ambergris Caye, the future of tourism, and the future of Belize. The Government of Belize believes that now is the time to plan for the next generation of development and to ensure that San Pedro remains the premier destination in the region for decades to come.

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