

SAN ANTONIO BUSINESS JOURNAL

Site expert: SA candidate for Amazon-backed vehicle assembly facility

The presence of Toyota and Navistar are just two factors that may work in Alamo City's favor



Rivian is pursuing plans for a second U.S. manufacturing facility to produce its electric vehicles.

By W. Scott Bailey – Senior Reporter, San Antonio Business Journal
July 26, 2021

Rivian, a California-based electric vehicle company backed in part by Amazon.com Inc., is pursuing potential locations for a second manufacturing facility in the U.S. and San Antonio warrants strong consideration,

That's according to at least one national site selection expert highly familiar with the gains the Alamo City has made in advanced auto manufacturing and the geographic advantages it could provide the EV startup.

“San Antonio fits the profile of what Rivian should be looking for, and what any diligent, EV manufacturing site search should be looking for: low operating costs, low taxes, pro-business right-to-work law and, most importantly, manufacturing skill sets,” said John Boyd, principal at The Boyd Group, a Boca Raton-based firm.

Rivian opened its first manufacturing facility in Normal, Illinois, where the company also has engineering, supply chain, logistics, IT, and quality and customer engagement operations. It also has a presence in Arizona, Michigan, Canada and the United Kingdom.

On July 23, Rivian announced that it had closed a \$2.5 billion private funding round. That financing was led in part by Amazon’s Climate Pledge Fund, D1 Capital Partners and Ford Motor Co.

Rivian CEO R.J. Scaringe said the infusion of that new capital will allow the company to scale new vehicle programs, expand its domestic facility footprint and fuel international product rollout.

Rivian’s Amy Mast said, “while it’s early in an evolving process,” the company is indeed “exploring locations” for a second U.S. manufacturing facility.

Asked if San Antonio has tossed its hat into the ring, Greater: SATX President and CEO Jenna Saucedo Herrera declined to comment. She has, however, been vocal about the gains the Alamo City has made in advanced manufacturing courtesy of the huge investments automakers Toyota and Navistar have made and are making here.

“Toyota and Navistar put an exclamation point on the region’s talent and labor market advantages,” Boyd said. “Another advantage San Antonio brings to the table is its proximity to Mexico. That’s a unique asset that San Antonio enjoys.”

According to Boyd, there are several suppliers south of the border that Rivian could potentially partner with.

Said Mast, “We look forward to working with a supportive, technology-forward community in order to create a partnership as strong as the one we have with Normal, Illinois.”