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**Bexar County Passes Annual Budget
For Fiscal Year 2022/23**

Earlier this morning, County Commissioners voted to approve a record \$2.9 billion balanced budget. The current tax rate of \$0.299999 will be maintained, making this the 28th consecutive year in which Bexar County either lowers or maintains the tax rate for property owners.

Budget Overview

The FY 2022-23 adopted budget for the General Fund totals \$562.3 million with the maximum state allowed tax exemption. This represents an increase of \$32 million or 7 percent compared to last year's operating budget. The budget totals \$2.9 billion for all funds.

A newly passed homestead exemption for homeowners will provide an overall relief of \$207 million to property owners. Rating agencies once again recognized Bexar County's prudent fiscal management, allowing the county to maintain a top AAA credit rating.

Public Safety Investments

With public safety a focus of the 2022/23 county budget, demands of law enforcement, the court system, and comprehensive community services were met. These are significant investments in the future and safety of our growing community.

Sheriff's Office Updates

The Bexar County Sheriff's Office will operate on an overall budget of \$157.2 million, representing an increase of 3.5%. Twelve additional patrol deputy positions were added in contingencies. In addition, 21 civilian positions will be reinstated, which will free up deputies currently performing those duties to go back to servicing the jail. As a result, there will be 34 additional deputies assigned to law enforcement or detention duties, addressing some of the most urgent needs within the agency.

District Courts Update

Additional funds for Family Violence Protection programs totaling \$340,598 will pay for more psychiatric services, danger assessments, and counseling services. Children Courts and their therapy services received \$410,000.

With an increase in in-person court activities, jury operations received funding of more than \$185,000 for three additional positions and respective supplies to improve front desk services for the public.

District Attorney Updates

Notable program change highlights include:

- Funding in the amount \$1,529,307 for 17 new positions in the District Attorney's office, the majority of which will work to improve the case intake process.
- Six additions, six deletions and eleven reclassifications were approved at a cost of \$697,000 in the Bexar County Information Technology Department (BCIT) for continued implementation of the BCIT Strategic Plan.

Medical Examiners Office

In recognition of the increased demands from a growing population and an extremely competitive professional field, the Medical Examiner's office will receive six additional positions at a cost of \$628,705. These additions will address an increase in the workload and maintain accreditation by the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME).

Current staff has weathered not only mass casualty incidents in the recent past, but also helped maintain the quality of an increased investigative load without additional personnel. Supplemental staff pay will be made available for this coming fiscal year. The office will also add a family assistance specialist to maintain service levels in helping families navigate the aftermath of a loved one's death.

Annual Capital Improvement Program

The county currently has several major capital improvement projects underway. These projects include a satellite facility in Precinct 4, a new facility for Agri-Life Extension Services, a new Workforce Training Center, a new criminal investigations laboratory, jail improvements/upgrades, and new enterprise systems. Work on these projects will continue through FY 2022-23.

These and other new capital projects in FY 2022-23 will receive \$82.5 million. This includes \$18 million in funding for new facilities and improvements to existing County facilities. Technology projects will receive \$13 million, including a new human resource information system, and \$10 million for repair and improvement projects at the Adult Detention Center Campus.

Bexar County invested heavily in cultural resources approving \$5 million in a matching grant for the San Antonio African American Community Archive & Museum, \$300,000 for the Mexican American Civil Rights Institute, and \$1.5 million for the Cultural Museum at Padre Park.

Reaction by County Commissioners Court

County Judge Nelson Wolff:

"I really appreciate our budget staff for the great job they did on this year's budget. I think we made some good headway today. There are a lot of exciting things happening for each precinct in this budget and with it being my last budget vote, I couldn't be more pleased. This budget provides Bexar County with tremendous growth and opportunity."

Precinct 1 Commissioner Rebecca Clay-Flores:

"This year's budget provides more cultural and educational resources for our community. I fought to secure \$5 million for the San Antonio African-American Community Archive & Museum, and advocated for an additional \$1.5 million for our future Native American Cultural Center on the Southside. We also approved 1 million for a new Bibliotech in Precinct 1, and a commitment from the Sheriff's Office to have more deputies patrolling in the Northwest area of the precinct after the addition of 12 deputies. Overall, this year's budget is securing a safer and more resourceful county for our residents."

Precinct 2 Commissioner Justin Rodriguez:

"Since the Spring, my colleagues and I have been meeting with county departments, external stakeholders, and the budget staff to review and assess needs. After months of tough deliberations, we have adopted a budget that is balanced and healthy. More importantly, we have prioritized spending to maintain delivery of core county services, address operational gaps, and invest in important community initiatives."

Precinct 3 Commissioner Marialyn Barnard:

"Initially, I wanted to reduce the tax rate, but I support this budget because I realized that with the maxed-out homestead exemption, we're cutting \$207 million out of this year and over \$1 billion over the next 5 years. This is significant as major inflation continues to be an issue for our constituents and it is important that we work to address this. I applaud the county staff for their hard work in preparing this budget"

Precinct 4 Commissioner Tommy Calvert:

"The inclusion of the San Antonio African-American Community Archive & Museum is a very important step forward in including everyone in our tourism economy. There have been major contributions that have been overlooked, and the partnership with the county in which the capital program is, is very important. We also invested in law enforcement and things that will improve public safety like the solar lighting program, and trash collection. We moved some major milestones forward that have not been done in the history of Bexar County."

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