



Bexar County Public Information Office
San Antonio, Texas 78205-3036

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Contact: Monica Ramos
210.335.2742/o
210.289.5751/m

**Bexar County Manager Proposes Balanced Budget with increases in
Public Safety, Employee Compensation and Capital Projects**

County Manager David Smith has presented the proposed budget for fiscal year (FY) 2023-2024 recommending substantial gains for public safety, capital programs and employee compensation and benefits. The proposed budget focuses on increasing safety, creating long lasting career pathways for County employees and providing for stronger neighborhoods through targeted community investments.

Public Safety

With direction from County Commissioners Court, David Smith is placing public safety at the top of the list to include **50 Law Enforcement positions** in the proposed budget. Funding in the amount of \$3.02 million is included to pay for these positions consisting of 36 law enforcement patrol deputies, 6 sergeants and 8 investigators. These positions are proposed to be phased in over the next fiscal year.

An additional **16 Deputy Constable** positions are also proposed, at a cost of \$2.35 million, four for each of the four precincts. Two of the four positions are proposed to enforce traffic laws and schools while the other two positions are proposed to serve all protective orders issued by the Family Justice Center. Two additional Deputy Constables are proposed for Bexar County Precinct 4 to augment security and law enforcement services to the Juvenile Justice Academy.

Employee Compensation and Benefits

County employees are the most valuable asset. New market study tables implemented earlier this year resulted in most employees receiving an increase of about 3.5 percent. **The proposed budget will address seniority and tenure and adjust compression.** Employees not covered by the collective bargaining agreement will receive an increase for each year they have been in their current positions.

Additionally, a new **Performance Pay Program** will be introduced. Over the course of the FY 2023-2024, the Human Resources Department will work with offices and departments to

implement this program. Working through the performance appraisal process, employees may receive up to a 5 percent salary increase in FY 2024-2025.

For non-exempt employees, a **Step Pay Plan** will be developed for implementation during this same time period. Under this proposal, employees with satisfactory employee appraisals will move to the next step in the pay plan on an annual basis. Under the proposal, 2,323 employees would receive an average of 3 percent salary increase between each step as a result.

Both the Performance Pay Program and the Step Pay Plan proposals will apply to only employees not covered by the collective bargaining agreement contingent on available funds in FY 2024-2025.

Capital Projects

Investment in our local communities is vital to their success. **Fifty-five key capital improvement projects are proposed to enhance and expand existing services at a cost of \$50.3 million.** These include \$10 million to help fund improvements to the Defense Health Agency, a healthcare facility at Kelly Airforce Base, funding for a new community park in Precinct 1, a new satellite office in Precinct 2, flood control improvements in our suburban cities.

County Manager David Smith concluded, “Today’s proposed budget balances the current needs of our community while looking towards the future. It provides for safer neighborhoods, community spaces for our residents and strengthens our County workforce.”

The Proposed Budget totals \$2.95 billion for all funds, including \$751 million in Operating Appropriations, \$865 million in Capital Projects, and \$164 million for Debt Service. The FY 2023-2024 Proposed Budget for the General Fund totals \$631.9 million compared to last year’s operating budget of \$568.8 million, or an increase of \$63 million. The Proposed Budget is balanced at the existing tax rate of \$0.299999, the same tax rate as last year. If approved, this would be the 29th consecutive year in which Bexar County either lowers or maintains its tax rate for property owners.

Next Steps

Budget work sessions, as needed, are tentatively scheduled for

Tuesday, August 29, 2023

Thursday, August 31, 2023

Wednesday, September 6, 2023

Monday, September 11, 2023

The FY 2022-23 is scheduled to be adopted on Tuesday, September 12, 2023, at 9 a.m.

Please visit www.bexar.org for the latest information.

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