Next County Budget Meeting this Thursday! Commissioner Calvert hails new video *The Link* project and developments at former Windsor Park Mall.

Next Countywide Budget Committee meeting this Thursday!

The Bexar County budget was likened to the Death Star in Star Wars by community advocates as they watched budget proposals get cut by a random cap on Commissioners instituted for the first time by Judge Sakai and conceded to by three other Commissioners. The random cap was 10 million dollars for all Commissioners and 400,000 dollars for everything else in the county budget.

The Countywide Budget Committee is a community-driven vehicle for analysis and action aiming to remediate inequities in the Bexar County budget and the lack of transparency in its processes.

Its first meeting on October 4th led to an agreement to continue meetings throughout the coming months on numerous funding topics and in hopes of raising awareness of identified problems among Bexar County residents.

The Next County Budget Committee Meeting is this Thursday, November 16, 2023. It will be at First Unitarian Universalist Church, 7150 W. Interstate 10, San Antonio, TX 78213. Categories of discussion will be Capital expenditures and General Government.

Stunning Concept Video of *The Link*, an innovative linear park in north downtown sector that will connect San Antonio Riverwalk to San Pedro Creek.

Following public input from a wide range of stakeholders, County Commissioner Tommy Calvert (Pct. 4), the San Antonio River Authority and engineering firm Vickrey & Associates are releasing a video that offers a glimpse into current plans for The Link, a quarter-mile linear park that aims to activate the now quiet north-end of downtown. Today at 6:00-7:30 PM, press and community are invited to the Central Library (600 Soledad St, San Antonio, TX
78205) for a presentation of the project, which will include a video (see below) showing what it would be like to fly through one of four separate concepts for the new riverwalk connection between the San Antonio River and San Pedro Creek.

A welcome, shaded oasis among downtown’s concrete jungle, The Link is expected to provide a new and exciting way for residents and visitors to experience downtown. The project’s proposed design features a water flyover, soaring chrome birds, and lush landscaping. Visitors will be greeted by statues of St. Peter and St. Anthony, the namesakes of the project’s two connecting rivers, and will find calm in a meditative space featuring three crosses. The park is also expected to accommodate a memorial to the Buffalo Soldiers, the US Army’s all-Black infantry and cavalry units following the Civil War, whose 9th Regiment gathered at the present location of San Pedro Springs Park.

"The release of this video is an exciting milestone in the development of The Link," says Commissioner Calvert, a strong advocate for the project. "The video beautifully captures the vision for this transformative project and will help the public understand the many benefits it will bring to our community. With features that appeal to both locals and tourists alike, this project has incredible potential to revitalize downtown’s North Central sector and boost the overall attractiveness of San Antonio globally."

Watch Video Here:
The project is being led by the San Antonio River Authority, engineering firm Vickrey & Associates, and Bexar County, which already allocated $41.1 million in September 2021 under Commissioner Calvert’s leadership. The Link will connect the San Antonio River Walk at Convent Park following Savings Street to San Pedro Creek below Soledad, Main and Flores streets, connecting at street level on Camaron.

Forecasts project as much as $5 billion in economic impact over 10 years from the park. Universal Services Group, owner of the Thompson Hotel, plans to anchor one end of The Link with the new Dream Hotel, as part of a larger $400 million redevelopment investment. The Group has agreed to 25% of the residential part of the development’s property taxes to be dedicated to affordable housing programs by the City of San Antonio.

**Link Project Benefits**

- Public gateway from the San Antonio River to the San Pedro Culture Park to access and enjoy both trails.
- Provides recreational trails and health activities in the North Central downtown area.
- Completes a loop of pedestrian trails around the downtown area of San Antonio.
- Provides a place to celebrate family, art, history, and culture.
- Increases economic development in the North Central downtown area.
- Provides a destination for the entire community, including locals, workers, students, and tourists.
- Leverages $400M in prior community investments.
The park will cool down the downtown heat island by adding trees, recycled air conditioner condensate to a closed loop water system. 

New outdoor amenities are expected to activate the now quiet north-end of downtown,
Rendering of the Dream Hotel project, slated to be built at one end of The Link linear park.

Statement from Commissioner Tommy Calvert on Motion for Approval and Execution of a Master Economic Incentives Agreement by and between Bexar County, the City of Windcrest, the City of Windcrest Economic Development Corporation and Industrial Commercial Properties, LLC for the acquisition and redevelopment of the property formerly known as the Windsor Park Mall (Commissioners Court Work Session, Nov. 14, 2023)

"Windcrest has been on a roll with economic development and to keep that going, I'm supporting the incentives that we will move forward in Commissioners Court. I also am proposing the County develop a Tax Increment Refinance Zone for the stretch of Walzem from Austin Highway to Montgomery Road so that we can fight blight and build back this corridor that has been a beacon for economic development for many years."

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