



Business center planned for Georgetown

BY SHANON COLLETTI

STORY HIGHLIGHTS

- RIVERY PARK TO HAVE CONFERENCE CENTER, HOTEL AND CLASS A OFFICE SPACE
- COMPLEX WILL PROVIDE EASY ACCESS TO PARK, RIVER AND TRAILS

While driving one day, Dan Clark found himself parking his car and wandering the trails of Georgetown's Rivery Park, unable to get enough of the natural beauty.

"It was clearly to me a site that could have a lot of promise to be an asset to the community, a good development project and something that could be very unique," Clark, vice president of development at the Austin-based LedgeStone Group, said.

The result is the planned project, The Summit at Rivery Park — a business-entertainment center and portal to the park area that will distinguish itself by making the surrounding environment a central focus of its design.

At a June city council workshop, LedgeStone unveiled its intention to develop approximately 31 acres of the park, an area nestled between Williams Drive and Rivery Boulevard, just west of IH 35.

The development will include a conference center with a capacity of up to 2,500;

an upscale, multi-story hotel with 250 to 350 rooms; a Class A office tower of between 120,000 and 240,000 sq. ft.; four or more professional office condominiums; and two high-end restaurants. The 650,000 sq. ft. site will encourage easy access to the river and nearby trails.

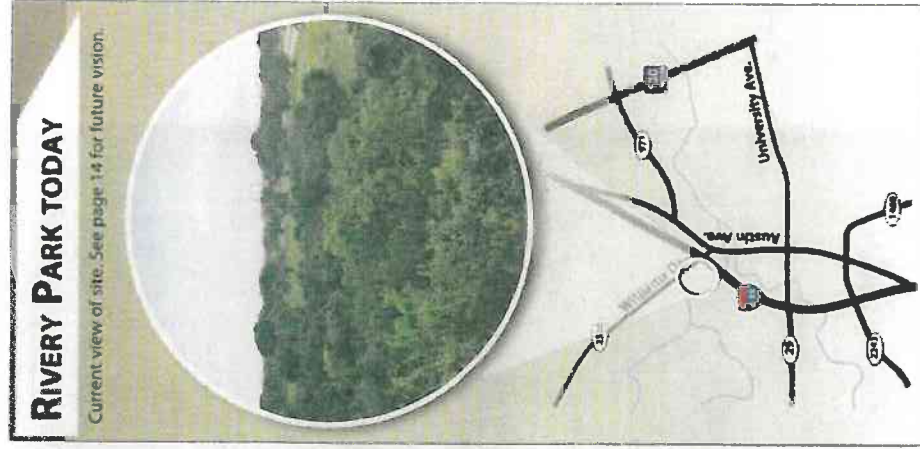
"That was the real draw in the first place," said Mark Thomas, Georgetown economic development director. "It is a beautiful site on the North San Gabriel River, and it's located along the national award-winning trail that goes from San Gabriel Park to Lake Georgetown. It's absolutely beautiful."

A distinctive location

The combination of its picturesque natural surroundings, connectivity to downtown and proximity to IH 35 could make The Summit a unique addition to the city.

In an area flanked by the North San Gabriel River, thick with trees and bustling with wildlife, the project will look unlike many urban developments.

"What we want to do in partnering with Georgetown and the Parks [and Recreation] Department is to complete the Rivery Park amenities there," Clark said. "We're going to retain much of the native landscape and



RIVERY PARK TODAY

Current view of site. See page 14 for future vision.

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work it to get people to want to walk down at the river."

Clark said he plans to have a pedestrian-friendly layout that shows off the pristine water features and natural, shaded areas.

"They're very conscious of the environment," Thomas said of LedgeStone. "The developer has said they want to maintain as many of the trees and natural foliage as possible. The designs they're coming up with use the open spaces that are currently available to minimize the impact on the trees that may be on the site."

Marlene McMichael, a government relations specialist and Planning and Zoning board member, cited the ease of travel between The Summit and downtown Georgetown as another unique aspect of the project. She added that with the recent



THE SUMMIT AT RIVERY PARK



This early sketch depicts the future development. Four condos will offer high-end office space (top). Plans also include a hotel, two restaurants, an office tower and conference center.

addition of Toll 130 and Toll 45, maneuvering around the region is even easier.

"We think that the connectivity is very good," McMichael said. "We don't have to build roads to make this happen, and we think the transportation improvements only facilitate that, that much more."

In addition to the scenic landscape and proximity to downtown Georgetown, The Summit will be located just off of IH 35, making it visible from the highway and convenient to access.

Transforming the city

More enhancements of Rivery Park will signify other changes for the city. Georgetown residents will have more opportunity to work closer to home. The conference center will serve as a large facility for conventions, something the city currently lacks.

"It will provide commercial office space for those who would prefer to have their office needs met in the Georgetown location versus farther locations," Clark said. "We believe it will service a need that's there. That way, they can work where they live and really enjoy the benefits of Georgetown."

Because it's still early in the project, Clark would not disclose any potential tenants, but said there is "strong interest" from several companies. He could not yet give an estimated cost either. Alderman/Paccone Architects is doing the design. Construction is planned for next year and will take two to three years to complete.

"I really just like the inherent landscape present there," Clark said. "It's a very nice place now; we'd like to get some upgrades, making it into a very, very nice place."

THE CONFERENCE CENTER

Developer Dan Clark preferred the planned large meeting structure be called a 'conference center,' rather than a 'convention center.' He said the space isn't large enough for the typical convention center.

AREA LARGE-CAPACITY MEETING FACILITIES

Facility	Capacity
The Summit at Rivery Park*	2,500
Austin Marriott North in Round Rock	500
Palmer Events Center in Austin	6,434
Renaissance Austin Hotel in Arboretum	2,000

*Opening 2-3 years