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For Immediate Release

RGV Epicenter Officially Breaks Ground on Mixed-Use Development with Hotel/Convention, Retail/Dining, Entertainment, Wellness and Business Center

San Benito, Texas - The City of San Benito and Western Spherical Developers celebrated the official groundbreaking for Phase 1 of the RGV Epicenter development project, a multi-phase 115-acre Mixed-Use Development that will include a hotel, convention center, retail, dining, entertainment, wellness services, and business center. RGV Epicenter (RGVE) is located at the intersection of I-69 and FM 509/Paseo Real. Phase 1 represents 38 acres of the three-phase, comprehensive 115-acre development.

David Miles, Western Spherical Developers, LLC, lead and development partner explained, “RGV Epicenter is planned as a destination for area residents, businesses, and visitors to have a place where a variety of needs and conveniences are met, where businesses offer job opportunities and valuable services, and where emerging technology and international business build collaborations.”

Conversations with the City of San Benito began almost 4 years ago to look at opportunities in San Benito. Since then, there have been numerous meetings and discussions with many people to create a comprehensive vision for the RGV Epicenter development that not only meets the needs of the community, but also anticipates progressive initiatives for economic development. What started out as a 20-acre project has grown to a 115-acre multi-phased, mixed-use development that will make a positive impact on Downtown San Benito and the surrounding communities.

The schedule for Phase 1 allows for build-out along the existing utilities off FM 509, enabling the sale of out-parcels, and building-out infrastructure resulting in a quicker start on vertical construction.

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Additional details regarding amenities in Phase 1 include hotel and convention, wellness center and therapeutic services, aeronautics and space-themed experiences, innovative office space, dining, retail, a lagoon-like water amenity, innovative and energy efficient technology incorporated in design and services, outdoor entertainment features for activities and special events set in a walkable, aesthetically pleasing environment. Project design creates connectivity between various amenities for ease of access and functionality. An example of this is the inclusion of an elevated causeway connecting the hotel with the medical wellness center.

For Phase 1, the construction, development, and operation of RGV Epicenter will create approximately 319 full time construction jobs and 758 direct and indirect full time local jobs during the construction phase. Another 1,013 direct and indirect full time local jobs will be realized with the operation of the hotel and convention center. Phase 1 job opportunities include hospitality, retail, office workers, aeronautics, international business initiatives, and specialty services such as medical wellness. Job creation numbers and opportunities will grow significantly with Phases 2 and 3 (still in design and concept stage).

Completion of Phase 1 is anticipated by first quarter 2026. Initiation of construction for Phase 2 is anticipated to begin by first quarter 2023. Completion of Phases 2 and 3, still in concept and design phase, will depend on many factors.

RGV Epicenter will establish a business community with the technology and services to support local business and international initiatives. The RGVE Team's intent is to collaborate with higher education and technical colleges to establish training programs and internships supporting the growth of a trained workforce that will help attract new industry to the area, support job creation for opportunities with higher paying wages, and offer training for advanced skills needed in emerging technology and industry.

Miles continued, "The overarching goals for Epicenter are to not only meet current needs of the San Benito community, but also anticipate community needs, create a center of community amenities, honor the history and culture, and create place for a thriving, innovative business community serving San Benito, the region and international markets. RGV Epicenter is so much more than the typical mixed-use development. We want to be a community partner, too."

During the 2019 legislative session, the passage of key legislation sought by the City of San Benito, created a state hotel tax incentive for economic development projects with qualifying amenities such as a hotel and convention center. On July 7, 2020, the San Benito City Commission reached an agreement with Western Spherical Developers for Phase I of the construction and development of the RGV Epicenter.

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On target with real estate trends, the RGV Epicenter development will offer experiences available nowhere else in the Valley. A valuable and highly desirable element of the development project is its position between Downtown San Benito and a vibrant hospital and educational concentration that can benefit from the services and recreational activities offered in the RGVE project.

“We are happy with the city's relationship with Western Spherical Developers,” said Manuel De La Rosa, San Benito City Manager. “It is a new day in San Benito as this project will serve as a catalyst for other development projects. The outside world can now see the benefit of these private investments in our community.”

Cameron County and San Benito are well-positioned to build on the South Padre Island, Mexico, and surrounding area markets for tourism and international business. With market growth comes the attraction of new businesses and people to the area. In turn, the availability of hotels, recreation, technology, entertainment, and essential services for well-being are critical to sustainable growth. All of these elements are incorporated in the RGV Epicenter concept.

Charles Johnson, Johnson Consulting and RGV Epicenter partner explained, “It is important to create a healthy lifestyle by blending work and play. This development is unique in offering diverse work opportunities in a setting that will be fun for living, working, and recreational activities. RGV Epicenter will be a distinctive destination for both tourism and business. Opportunities with cooperative marketing for the region is significant.”

Looking forward to initiatives in Phase 2 and 3, the RGVE Team is collaborating with additional partners to create a community for veterans and first responders with housing, wellness programs, services, technology, and business initiatives. This business model and related programs will serve as an example to communities across the country in creating a supportive environment and business community for our honored frontline heroes.

Innovative design and emerging technologies will be incorporated in RGV Epicenter applying energy efficient and green construction principles to lessen RGVE's carbon footprint as an environmentally responsible community partner.

The vision for RGV Epicenter positions San Benito as a catalyst in creating opportunity for residents and businesses through job creation and job training programs, incorporates amenities that provide the accessibility and quality of services supporting the well-being of area residents, position San Benito as a leader in economic development opportunities with international business initiatives attracting new business to the area, and ultimately, create a desirable destination attracting travelers and businesses for entertainment, dining and retail, wellness, meetings, lodging, and maybe a few new experiences.

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