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# Water park, convention center plan matures

95 acres in Cedar Park to be developed starting next year

**Austin Business Journal - by [Kate Harrington](#) ABJ Staff**

A proposed water park in Cedar Park has grown in size and cost as its developers move ahead with planning and negotiations for an incentive package with the city.

Rick Redmond, owner of the Volente Beach Waterpark on Lake Travis and a partner in the proposed Cedar Park water park, has closed on about 55 acres in the last several months, he says, increasing the project's footprint from its original 40 acres to 95 acres. Much of the newly bought land will go toward added parking and retail.

The estimated cost for phase one of the unnamed project, expected to break ground in early 2009, has gone from \$75 million to \$200 million, Redmond says. Plans for the project's second phase have also changed slightly, with an apartment concept removed and a convention center that could span up to 100,000 square feet added.

Phil Brewer, Cedar Park's economic development director, declines to give details about incentives Redmond is seeking from the city, saying it's not a finalized package.

Brewer says the multifamily concept was great but probably several years ahead of the city's market conditions.

"It wasn't feasible at this point to build that kind of project," Brewer says.

The water park's second phase still includes a hotel, retail and villas that people can buy shares of, Redmond says.

Redmond is working with a partner on the proposed park, which he declines to name, saying only that it's a money-equity partner in Dallas.

Meanwhile, Redmond says he is not working with the owners of Schlitterbahn, contrary to a rumor that had been circulating in Williamson County.

"I bought my first rides from [Schlitterbahn] for Volente Beach," Redmond says. "I know them, but right now there's nothing there. We've talked a little bit. ... If someday it works out, you never know."

Redmond is frank about the financial market's conditions contributing heavily to the project's delays, saying it would have been under construction by now if the economy hadn't declined sharply. But the Cedar Park market is dynamic for what he wants to do, he says, adding that Volente Beach is having its best year in attendance.

"This is just another chapter of turning Cedar Park into a Western Williamson County centerpiece," says Philip Duprey, former Cedar Park mayor pro tem.

With Cedar Park nearly built out and large parcels scarce, the proposed water park's location is advantageous, Duprey says.

"Being as close as it can be to the interstate and still within Cedar Park city limits is the best thing that can happen for the citizens here," he says. "We will be importing money."

**Courtesy of JB Goodwin**