

**CITY OF BRENHAM  
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MINUTES  
February 23, 2026**

*The meeting minutes herein are a summarization of meeting procedures, not a verbatim transcription.*

A regular meeting of the Brenham Planning and Zoning Commission was held on February 23, 2026, at 5:15 pm in the Brenham Municipal Building, City Council Chambers, at 200 West Vulcan Street, Brenham, Texas.

Commissioners present:

M. Keith Behrens, Chair  
Deanna Alfred, Vice Chair  
Chris Cangelosi  
Calvin Kossie  
Cyndee Smith

Commissioners absent:

Darren Heine  
Cayte Neil

Staff present:

Stephanie Doland, Development Services Director  
Shauna Laauwe, City Planner  
Kim Hodde, Planning Technician

Citizens/Media present:

Joshua Blaschke, KWHI	Jenifer Amerson
Cathy & Rick Hamm	Ginny Hartmann
Billy Howk	Mark Feldhake
Wade & Susan Seidel	Donald W. Lampe
Lynette Sheffield	Pat Ehlert
Ray Robinson	Celia Kincaid
Sam Seidel	Ken & Charlotte Williams
Penny Cies	

**1. Call Meeting to Order**

Chairman Behrens called the meeting to order at 5:17 pm with a quorum of five (5) Commissioners present.

**2. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

### **3. Reports and Announcements**

Stephanie Doland, Director of Development Services, informed the Board that if they have not completed the mandatory Board training within the last three (3) years, City Secretary Jeana Bellinger will be sending an email regarding in-person and online training options.

### **4. Statutory Consent Agenda**

The Statutory Agenda includes non-controversial and routine items that the Commission may act on with one single vote. A Commissioner may pull any item from the Consent Agenda in order that the Commission discuss and act upon it individually as part of the Regular Agenda.

- 4-a. Minutes from January 26, 2026, Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting.**
- 4-b. Minutes from February 5, 2026, Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting.**
- 4-c. Case Number LOTLINE-26-0001: A request by PK's 4 Way Properties, LLC / Prasad Koneru for approval of a commercial Replat of Robbie's Four Way and an 11,421 square foot tract of land to create Robbie's Four Way Lot 1A, being 1.675-acres and further described as part of the A. Harrington Survey, A-55, in Brenham, Washington County, Texas.**

Chairman Behrens called for a motion for the statutory consent agenda. A motion was made by Commissioner Alfred and seconded by Commissioner Kossie to approve the Statutory Consent Agenda (Items 4-a to 4-c), as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

### **REGULAR SESSION**

- 5. Public Hearing, Discussion and Possible Action on Case Number LOTLINE-25-0015: A request by Eigentum Capital, LLC / Sam Seidel (McClure & Browne Engineering/Surveying, Inc.) for approval of a Replat of Reserve "A" of the Oak Alley Subdivision, Phase 2 to create Oak Alley Subdivision, Phase 3 containing 5.281-acres, being Lots 11-21 in Block 2 and Lots 2-9 in Block 4, and further described as part of the James Walker Survey, A-106, in Brenham, Washington County, Texas.**

Shauna Laauwe, City Planner, presented the staff report for Case No. LOTLINE-25-0015. Ms. Laauwe stated that the property owner and applicant is Eigentum Capital, LLC / Sam Seidel and the Surveyor is McClure & Browne Engineering & Surveying, Inc. The subject property is approximately 5.281-acres and is generally located on the east side of South Blue Bell Road and on the west end of Oak Alley Blvd. The property was previously platted as Unrestricted Reserve "A" in Oak Alley Phase 2 and is part of the Oak Alley Planned Development approved by Ordinance O-18-002 and O-13-020, which was the first Planned Development District in the City of Brenham. Mr. Seidel is ready to develop Oak Alley Phase 3; therefore, a replat is required. This proposed replat consists of Lots 11-21 in Block 2 and Lots 2-9 in Block 4, with Lots 2-6 being designated as patio homes. Lots 2-9 in Block 4 have an alley (designated access easement) at the rear of their property for rear access. In addition to the existing public utility easements, the plat includes the dedication of a 10-foot public utility easement along the front property line of all lots, alternating 12.5-foot and 7.5-foot public utility easements along joining property lines for Lots 14 and 15 and Lots 18 and 19 (20-feet combined), as well as a 20-foot public utility easement along South Blue Bell Road along the rear property lines of the lots in Block 4. The plat also includes an 8,925 square foot common area and detention pond adjacent to Lots 20 and 21, along South Blue Bell Road, to be maintained by the Homeowners Association.

A Public Hearing Notice was published in the Banner Press and notices were mailed to property owners within 200 feet of the subject properties on February 5, 2026. At the time the packet was printed, staff received three citizen comments **in support** of the request from Bob Rankin, Sally Justus/Dan Grooman, and Elton and Cynthia Robinson, and one comment **against** the request from Lynnette Sheffield. On February 23<sup>rd</sup>, staff received citizen comments **against** the requested replat from the following:

- Celia Kinkaid
- Cynthia Robinson
- Jenifer Amerson
- Jayne Ponder
- Sally Justus and Daniel Grooman
- Mary Ann Schulte
- Penny Cies
- Patsy Hermann
- Virginia Harmann

Engineering and Development Services have reviewed the proposed Replat for compliance with the City of Brenham's applicable regulations and ordinances and recommend approval of the replat as presented.

Stephanie Doland clarified that the Planned Development (PD) documents require alley/rear access for the patio homes, and although there is no on-street parking allowed on Oak Alley Blvd, the PD didn't set out requirements for additional public parking. Ms. Doland further stated that the civil plans have not been submitted or reviewed yet as this is just for consideration of the replat. The driveways will need to accommodate two (2) off-street parking spaces.

Chairman Behrens closed the regular session and opened the public hearing at 5:30 pm. Lynnette Sheffield, who is the original developer of the Oak Alley Subdivision, provided a handout of Special Provisions Addendums to the Board and highlighted the following items:

- Page 1, paragraph 6 states that Ms. Sheffield has the right to review the preliminary and final plats to ensure that Phase 3 has a similar design to Phases 1 & 2.
- Page 2 shows that Reserve "A" was conveyed to the Seidel's.
- Page 3 shows 8 residences on the south side of Oak Alley Blvd and Mr. Seidel told her that he plans to use the existing alley access and public parking for these lots as well. Ms. Sheffield stated that there are only 5-6 spaces for public parking.
- Page 4 shows that there are already 5 lots and a vacant lot using the small alley entrance. With the addition of 8 additional lots using this access this could create a problem with just the one point of ingress and egress.
- Page 6, Exhibit C states that there is no parking along Oak Alley Blvd once the construction is completed and that guest parking is on a first come first serve basis.

Ms. Sheffield requested that Mr. Seidel consider a separate entrance for this phase for ingress and egress as well as a separate parking lot.

Ray Robinson stated that he was initially in support of the replat until he learned that there was no additional public parking proposed. He said there are 6-7 spaces and usually only about 4 are used but with the additional homes the existing public parking may not be sufficient. He further stated that as a resident of Oak Alley Subdivision, he feels entitled to some off-street parking since there is no on street parking on Oak Alley Blvd.

Sam Seidel, owner and developer of Phase 3, addressed the Commissioners and stated that the proposed preliminary plat mimics the existing plats for Phases 1 and 2 that has 5 patio homes to the east and this plat proposes 5 patio homes to the west along with lots 7, 8 & 9 being lots that can take access from Oak Alley Blvd or the rear alley access.

Ms. Doland reiterated that the proposed plat meets all easements, right-of-way, and lot size requirements as well as other City of Brenham standards. Ms. Doland further clarified that there will be an entrance (private roadway) from Blue Bell Road to Oak Alley Blvd with this phase of construction. She further stated that the civil plans will be reviewed in depth when they are submitted but that the Fire Code states that a development of more than 30 homes requires two access points. As part of the civil plan review, if utility easement locations or lot lines change, a replat would be brought back to the Planning and Zoning Commission. Ms. Doland also noted that the proposed plat shows three (3) less lots than the preliminary plan that was approved along with the Planned Development District.

Chairman Behrens closed the public hearing and re-opened the regular session at 5:46 pm.

A motion was made by Commissioner Kossie and seconded by Commissioner Smith to approve the request by Eigentum Capital, LLC / Sam Seidel (McClure & Browne Engineering/Surveying, Inc.) for approval of a Replat of Reserve "A" of the Oak Alley Subdivision, Phase 2 to create Oak Alley Subdivision, Phase 3 containing 5.281-acres, being Lots 11-21 in Block 2 and Lots 2-9 in Block 4, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

**6. Public Hearing, Discussion and Possible Action on Case Number REZONE-26-0001: A city-initiated request for an Amendment to the City of Brenham's Official Zoning Map of the Code of Ordinances to change the zoning from a Local Business/Residential Mixed-Use District (B-1) to a Single-Family Residential Use District (R-1) for the properties identified as Lots 1A-8, Block 1 and Lots 1-16, Block 2 of the Timber Oaks Subdivision, Section III, and Lots 1-5 of the Timber Oaks Subdivision, Section IV, in Brenham, Washington County, Texas.**

Stephanie Doland, Development Services Director, presented the staff report for Case No. REZONE-26-001. Ms. Doland stated that this rezoning is listed as a city-initiated request since the rezoning petition that was submitted by Property Owners of Timber Oaks Subdivision, Sections III and IV did not have 100% of the property owner signatures. This rezoning request includes Lots 1A-8, Block 1 and Lots 1-16, Block 2 of the Timber Oaks Subdivision, Section III, and Lots 1-5 of the Timber Oaks Subdivision, Section IV that totals approximately 11.4 acres that is generally located west of Oak Tree Crossing Drive along Timber Oaks Drive, Oak Crest Lane and Twin Oaks. The subject properties are currently zoned B-1, Local Business Mixed Used and the adjacent properties to the immediate north, east, and south are also zoned B-1. The properties to the west are zoned B-2, Commercial Research and Technology and the properties to the north across Old Mill Creek Road are zoned as R-1, Single Family Residential and R-2, Mixed Residential. There are a variety of uses in the area including Abiding Word Church to the east, retail and car dealerships to the west and, and Blinn College to east and south of the residential neighborhood. The Future Land Use Map identifies these properties as single-family residential; therefore, the proposed rezoning does align with the Future Land Use Map.

The Timber Oaks Subdivision began in 2011 with the platting and construction of Oak Tree Crossing Drive. Then in 2015, Timber Oaks Section III was subdivided to include 24 single-family home lots. Most of the lots have been developed with single-family homes and four lots remain vacant out of the originally platted 24-lots. At the time of the initial platting of the residential streets for the neighborhood, a future development plan included the extension of additional residential lots to the south. However, the remaining acreage owned by the Developer was purchased by Blinn College and in 2025 an additional cul-

de-sac was platted creating an additional 5-lots within the neighborhood. Of the additional 5-lots recently subdivided, one home is currently under construction.

The neighborhood includes an active Homeowners Association and recently the HOA president and members of the HOA met with City staff to discuss the proposed sports complex planned by Blinn College on the vacant property to the south of the neighborhood. It was during discussions about the sports complex that discussions about the zoning arose. The B-1, Local Business Mixed District allows a variety of uses by-right, including single-family residential, neighborhood retail uses, offices, restaurants etc. Since residential development is permitted in the B-1 zoning district, it is likely that a rezoning to residential either was not discussed with the developer or not desired by the developer because the planned neighborhood was allowed as currently zoned. However, the intended future plans for the neighborhood remain a single-family residential neighborhood and as such the HOA understood the advantages of rezoning the property from B-1 to R-1, Single-Family Residential.

While the neighborhood does have adopted deed restrictions allowing single-family uses only, the City of Brenham cannot enforce said deed restrictions. As such, the property owners have requested rezoning of the approximately 11-acre neighborhood to R-1 instead of the current B-1 zoning in order to further protect the residential use of the neighborhood. A letter in support of the neighborhood rezoning, and a petition with 17 property owner signatures accompanies the rezoning request application in support of the request. Staff attended a Timber Oaks HOA meeting on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, sent notifications to all property owners, as well as contacted the remaining residents via phone and has received positive feedback from residents for the proposed rezoning.

#### **STAFF ANALYSIS**

- The Comprehensive Plan and the Future Land Use Map envision the subject area as single-family residential.
- The existing B-1 District allows both residential and non-residential uses. Possible non-residential uses do not align with the Future Land Use Map, the Comprehensive Plan or the existing land use.
- The requested R-1 District permits only single-family residential uses by right that supports the existing residential character and current use of the property.
- This proposed rezoning is being requested by the Timber Oaks Neighborhood Association to protect the long-term use of the property as a single-family neighborhood. If the rezoning request is denied, incompatible uses within the neighborhood could be developed.
- Properties would be subject to the applicable R-1 development and building standards.

A Public Hearing Notice was published in the Banner Press on February 11, 2026, and notices were mailed to property owners within 200-feet of the subject properties. Three written comments were received in **support** of the request from Shannon Juno, Naomi Rawle, and Saima Shaikh. Two additional comments in support of the rezoning were received at the meeting from Billy and Paula Howk and Rick and Cathy Hamm.

Development Services staff have reviewed this rezoning request for compliance with the City of Brenham's applicable regulations and ordinances and based on these findings and recommends approval proposed rezoning from B-1, Local Business Mixed Use zoning to R-1, Single Family Residential zoning for the properties identified as:

- Lots 1A-8, Block 1 and Lots 1-16, Block 2 of the Timber Oaks Subdivision, Section III; and
- Lots 1-5 of the Timber Oaks Subdivision, Section IV; and
- The right-of-way adjacent to the aforementioned properties.

Ms. Doland clarified that this rezoning would not adversely affect any of the surrounding properties as development standards such as screening and buffer yard standards are enforced based on the use of the property not to the zoning of the property.

Chairman Behrens closed the regular session and opened the public hearing at 6:00 pm. There were no citizen comments.

Chairman Behrens closed the public hearing and re-opened the regular session at 6:00 pm.

A motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Kossie to approve the city-initiated request to change the zoning from a Local Business/Residential Mixed-Use District (B-1) to a Single-Family Residential Use District (R-1) for the properties identified as Lots 1A-8, Block 1 and Lots 1-16, Block 2 of the Timber Oaks Subdivision, Section III, and Lots 1-5 of the Timber Oaks Subdivision, Section IV, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

## **WORK SESSION**

### **7. Discussion and Possible Direction to Staff on Miscellaneous Text Amendments Including Proposed Amendments to the Code of Ordinances, Chapter 6 – Buildings and Structures, and Appendix A - Zoning of the Code Ordinances including:**

- **Amendments to the Plumbing Code regarding new Car Washes**
- **Multifamily density requirements in the R-2, Mixed Residential District and in the Downtown Business/Residential Overlay District**
- **Bufferyards/Landscaping requirements**
- **Definition and zoning districts for Data Centers**

*[This is a workshop discussion only and no action will be taken]*

Shauna Laauwe, City Planner, stated that the Zoning Ordinance is a working document that needs to be amended and updated from time-to-time. Ms. Laauwe stated that staff has identified several amendments that are being proposed to the Zoning Ordinance and Chapter 6 – Buildings and Structures of the Code of Ordinances including:

- Clarifying the minimum area lot requirements for multifamily developments in the R-2, Mixed Family Residential District and the Downtown Business/Residential Overlay District.
- Amending the Landscape/Bufferyard regulations.
- Car Washes: Propose a local amendment to the Plumbing Code in the Code of Ordinances to enact water saving regulations for car washes.
- Data Centers: Define “Data Center” in the Definitions section of the Zoning Ordinance and list as a Specific Use in the Industrial Zoning District.

Ms. Laauwe stated that additional amendments may be brought before the Board in the next 4-5 months and explained each of the proposed amendments as follows:

### **Multifamily Developments**

Within the R-2, Mixed Residential District regulations found in the Code of Ordinances Appendix A- Zoning, Division 2, Part 2, Section 2.01, lot regulations for several types of housing are specified to include, single-family detached units, single-family attached units (townhomes), dwelling two-family (duplex), twin homes, zero lot line (patio homes), and multifamily units (apartments). In 2025, the Board of Adjustments (BOA) heard a case regarding an R-2 property on S. Park Street where the property owner of an irregular 6,142 SF lot, wished to convert an existing nonconforming structure into a four-unit multifamily use. The case required the BOA to consider several special exceptions and variances, but one that was nearly overlooked due to ambiguity in the regulations was the minimum lot area requirement for multifamily units. The regulations currently state “The minimum site for multifamily development shall be six

thousand (6,000) square feet.” With this section alone, it appears that the desired four (4) units are permitted. However, in Section 2.06(c)(i) Size of lots: Lot area, it states “There shall be a minimum of two thousand (2,000) square feet of lot area per multifamily dwelling unit.” Thus, four units require 8,000 square feet and the 6,142 square foot lot would not meet the regulations and would either require another variance request or reduce the number of desired units to three (3).

*Proposed Zoning Ordinance Language Shown in red throughout the remainder of the minutes.*

Staff proposes to amend Section 2.06(a) to state “ (a) Minimum site area. The minimum site for multifamily development shall be six thousand (6,000) square feet, **or two thousand (2,000) square feet of lot area per multifamily dwelling unit, whichever is greater.**”

In addition, Staff proposes to amend Section 9. Downtown Business/Residential Overlay District (Sec. 9.03) Area regulations, to amend a similar statement as follows:

(a) Minimum site area. The minimum site area for duplexes shall be five thousand (5,000) square feet and the minimum area for multifamily development shall **be a minimum of six thousand (6,000) square feet, or one thousand (1,000) square feet of lot area per multifamily dwelling unit, whichever is greater.**

### **Bufferyard Standards**

Bufferyard standards are adopted to help mitigate the impacts of dissimilar uses and incompatible land uses permitted to develop adjacent to one another. Bufferyard standards include an additional “setback” between whichever use develops second. For example, if a car wash were to develop next to an existing single-family home, then the car wash would be responsible for providing a buffer between the single-family residential and the car wash development. Current standards allow for the bufferyard to include 80% of the bufferyard as pavement for parking or driveway and therefore only 20% is required to have undeveloped green space.

Recent new developments have included car washes, townhomes, and medium-sized retail centers (5,000 SF) constructed adjacent to single-family residential uses. With these new developments, staff is finding that the bufferyard standards may not properly mitigate noise, odor or light between the above-described uses and single-family homes. As a result, City Staff began researching bufferyard standards of other municipalities to determine how Brenham standards compare. It was found that each municipality provides their own unique standards with bufferyard distances ranging across the jurisdictions. However, staff did note that landscaping within bufferyards is more clearly defined to provide a vegetative buffer in addition to physical separation. Section 12 in Appendix A – Zoning Regulations, is the Landscaping Chapter that regulates landscaping requirements for nonresidential and multifamily uses, parking lots, and bufferyards. The bufferyard landscaping regulations are found in Section 12.04. This section designates the amount of bufferyard required between incompatible uses and the percentage of the bufferyard area to be landscaped. Section 12.04 includes Table 3 that lists New Use categories (for new incompatible uses being developed or established) and the bufferyard requirements to adjacent existing uses. Staff proposes to amend Section 12.04 by adding and clarifying use categories to Table 3 and to modify the amount of landscaping required within the bufferyard area.

Table 3 currently lists seven (7) use categories that include: Single-Family (SF), Multifamily (MF), Mobile Home Pk. (MHP), Retail sales & service/Office/Institutions (3 stories or less), Office 4-6 stories (O), Light Industry (LI), and Heavy Industry (HI). Staff proposes to add the following uses:

- Townhome Development > 2 acres
- Office use (2 stories or less)
- Nonresidential Use < 1 acre
- Nonresidential Use > 1 acre
- Automobile related service

Section 12.04 currently states: “To further minimize potential noise, drainage, glare or other potential incompatibilities between the different uses, at least twenty (20) percent of any bufferyard shall be landscaped, pervious surface, said twenty (20) percent to be located at the outermost edge or perimeter of the bufferyard. The remaining land constituting a bufferyard may be used for onsite parking provided it meets all applicable performance standards.” In the current Table 3, a majority of the bufferyards are 20 feet and with 20 percent landscaping, only four (4) feet of landscaping along the perimeter is required. Thus, allowing the remainder sixteen (16) feet to be impervious surface for parking or driving aisles. As written, the bufferyards lack in the intent to minimize the potential noise, drainage and glare of incompatible uses and are more of a separation standard than a true buffer. Therefore, staff proposes to increase the bufferyard landscaping requirement from at least twenty (20) percent to at least fifty (50) percent pervious surface, with said fifty (50) percent to be located at the outermost edge or perimeter of the bufferyard. Staff proposes to amend Section 12.04 to state:

(Section 12.04) **Landscaping of bufferyards.** To further minimize potential noise, drainage, glare or other potential incompatibilities between the different uses, at least **fifty (50)** percent of any bufferyard shall be landscaped, pervious surface, said **fifty (50)** percent to be located at the outermost edge or perimeter of the bufferyard. The remaining land constituting a bufferyard may be used for on-site parking provided it meets all applicable performance standards. **A minimum of one (1) two (2) inch caliper tree with a minimum height of fifteen (15) feet or greater at maturity, shall be planted per twenty (20) linear feet of landscape bufferyard.**

In addition, Staff proposes to amend Table 3 to increase the bufferyard spacing for Nonresidential Uses < 1 acre, Nonresidential Uses > 1 acre; to create bufferyard requirements for Townhome Developments greater than 2 acres and Automobile related services; and, to reduce the bufferyard requirement for Office Uses 2 stories or less. Below is the draft amended Table 3 to include the new use categories and bufferyard spacing.

Table 3: Bufferyard requirements <sup>1</sup>							
New use category	Adjacent existing use category						
	SF	MF	MHP	R/O	O	LI	HI
Single-Family (SF)	none	20	20	20	50	75	125
<b>Townhome Development &gt; 2 acres</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>none</b>	<b>none</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>125</b>
Multifamily (MF)	20	none	none	15	25	25	125
Residential: 3 stories or greater	<b>30</b>	<b>none</b>	<b>none</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	125
<b>Manufactured Home Pk. (MHP)</b>	20	none	none	15	25	25	125
(R/O)							
<b>Office use (2 stories or less)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>none</b>	<b>none</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Nonresidential Use &lt; 1 acre</b>	<b>25</b>	15	15	none	none	25	50
<b>Nonresidential Uses &gt; 1 acre</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>none</b>	<b>none</b>	<b>none</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Automobile related services</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>none</b>	<b>none</b>	<b>none</b>	<b>none</b>
Light Industry (LI)	75	25	25	25	none	none	none
Heavy Industry (HI)	125	125	125	50	50	none	none

<sup>1</sup>Applicable bufferyard requirements shall be added to the standard yard requirements for the district in which the new use is located. If a public right-of-way is the only land use between a proposed new use and an existing use in a different use category, then the right-of-way width shall be credited to the required bufferyard. Required screening of the bufferyard shall be located on the property containing the new use. Where bufferyard requirements are not applicable, then standard yard requirements must be maintained as provided for the district in which the proposed use is located.

Automobile related services: Automobile centric uses to include car washes, convenience store with fuel sales, drive-thru food establishment, and auto-lube facilities.

Commissioner Smith suggested that staff meet with Jake Carlile regarding how this will affect his townhome developments since he is currently building a lot of townhomes in Brenham. Ms. Doland stated that discussions with Jake Carlile about bufferyard standards had already occurred. Ms. Doland further asked the Commissioners to consider serving on a subcommittee to assist staff with drafting text amendments. There were no Commissioners who volunteered for the subcommittee.

Stephanie Doland stated that the car wash and data center amendments will go to City Council in a work session scheduled for March 5<sup>th</sup>. The multifamily and bufferyard amendments will go to City Council at a later date. Once additional feedback is provided, a draft ordinance will be presented to the Planning and Zoning Commission and then the City Council for formal approval. Ms. Doland presented the remaining text amendment items regarding car washes and data centers.

### Car Washes

Ms. Doland stated that water conservation efforts are being considered locally and across Texas. The City of Brenham Public Utility Department monitors the number of water taps the City is using, as well as the amount of potable water that is consumed. In the past 4 years, 3 new car washes have been constructed in the City of Brenham, which has increased the amount of potable water being consumed. Two car washes in Brenham have drilled a water well and five car washes operate using the City's water system. To preserve water supply and encourage environmental sustainability and efficiencies, reclamation system requirements for future car washes are recommended. City Staff proposes to add a local amendment to the Plumbing Code in the Code of Ordinances to adopt water saving regulations for car washes.

#### FY 2025 Usage Data:

- Annual usage of two well customers is 2,872,600 and 4,238,200 gallons.
- Monthly non-well car wash usage has ranged from 9,000-492,100 gallons per month.

#### Major Benefits of Recycling Car Wash Water

- Dramatic water conservation
  - Some eco-friendly car washes use as little as 24 gallons of freshwater per vehicle, reclaiming up to 70% of the water.
- Cost savings
  - Car wash operators can significantly reduce their water and wastewater bills by having a recycling system.
  - These savings help with cost recovery of the recycling system.
- Environmental stewardship
  - The enclosed recycling system loop prevents untreated wastewater full of detergents, oils, and grime from entering a city's drainage and wastewater system.
- Regulatory compliance and improved image
  - Many cities require water recycling systems for a car wash to even get a building permit.
  - An "eco-friendly" or "green" business has a lot of advertising appeal.

#### Challenges and Considerations regarding reclamation systems:

- High initial investment – The systems are expensive but can be offset by long-term savings on water and sewer bills.
- Regular maintenance – The systems require upkeep.
- Water quality management – Chemical balance/purity is a challenge which if not properly controlled can lead to poor wash quality or even damage to a vehicle.
- Odor control – If the water isn't treated properly, it can develop a foul odor.

City Staff is only aware of IQ Car Wash, located at 1404 N. Park Street, as having a water reclamation system, though the use of reclamation systems and water wells have been encouraged when reviewing plans of recently built car washes. It will likely be unfeasible to require car washes already that are already operational to put in such systems, unless upgrades or improvements to current systems are being made. Currently car washes are allowed in the B-1 zoning district with approval of a specific use permit.

Ms. Doland noted that a traditional, automated car wash uses about 43 gallons of water for each vehicle compared to self-serve car washes that use an average of 15 gallons per vehicle. Home driveway car washes use approximately 100-140 gallons of water.

The proposed amendments to the Plumbing Standards within Chapter 6-61.1 Plumbing Code Local Amendments are drafted as follows:

#### Section 6-61.1: Plumbing Code Local Amendments

##### (12) Car Washes

- a) New conveyer and in-bay automatic car washes must be equipped with a water recycling system as approved by the General Manager of Public Utilities.
- b) New in-bay automatic car washes must use water recycling systems, ultra-low-flow spray nozzles or alternative means to achieve fresh water usage of no more than fifty-five (55) gallons per vehicle.

- c) New and existing self-service and mobile car washes must utilize positive shutoff device spray wands with a flow rate of no more than three (3) gallons per minute.
- d) Required water recycling systems shall be used at all times.
- e) Existing car washes which request a permit for renovation greater than 50 percent of the existing value of the facility, request to enlarge the water connection size, or replace more than 50 percent of the gross floor area of the car wash, shall install a water recycling system as required by this Ordinance.

Commissioner Cangelosi inquired about the payback timeframe with a water well. Ms. Doland responded that from her conversations with a person interested in putting in a car wash in Brenham, a water well would cost about \$150,000 initial investment and with their previous car washes in Texas and Oklahoma, this cost was recouped .

Commissioner Behrens asked if the 55-gallon per vehicle limitation was adopted, how would it be enforced. Ms. Doland agreed that it could be an enforcement issue, but additional research is needed as staff is not sure that 55-gallons per vehicle is the proper number to adopt.

Commissioner Alfred commented that drilling a water well involves several uncertainties, including how deep you must drill to reach water and whether the drilling might tap into one of the aquifers the City relies on. With the amount of water that car washes use, it is a scary thought to potentially have private wells drilling into the same aquifers that the City uses since water sources and availability is already an issue for Brenham.

Commissioner Alfred asked staff whether the City ever tells an applicant that we already have too many car washes (or any other use) and deny the request. Ms. Doland stated that car washes are currently allowed in the B-1 District with approval of a specific use permit so fewer approvals for the specific use permits could reduce the number of new car washes. A more drastic approach would be a moratorium on car washes; however, possibly being more intentional on locations for car washes would also be a possibility such as removing them as a use allowed by a specific use in the B-1 District.

### **Data Centers**

Data Centers are a rapidly growing industry throughout the state and country and are a use that are relatively new in terms of zoning standards. The City of Brenham Zoning Ordinance was first adopted in 1968 and then rewritten in 1995. To ensure said businesses are operated with reasonable safeguards in place for the community, development standards defining data centers and setting parameters for future locations is recommended. In 2022, a text amendment was approved prohibiting cryptocurrency mining as a home occupation. Senate Bill 6 regulates energy usage of data centers, especially during emergencies.

A Specific Use Permit is an approval granted by the City Council following a recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Commission and authorizes the operation of a use at a specific location within a zoning district on a case specific basis. Currently the use of a Data Center is allowed by right in Industrial Districts, setting a Specific Use Permit requirement for Data Centers in an Industrial District would allow a property specific analysis of a proposed Data Center and two public hearings, before the use would be granted. Additionally, property owners within 200-feet of a property being considered for a Specific Use Permit would receive a notice in the mail of the public hearing on the matter.

In addition to defining the use and allowing data centers only by Specific Use Permit, revisions which outline the type and utility usage of data centers are also recommended. Draft language is included below which outlines that data centers are prohibited from using a water cooled, evaporation system as their primary cooling agent.

- Defining data centers
  - **Data Center: Shall mean an establishment engaged in the storage, management, processing, and/or transmission of digital data, which houses computer and/or network equipment, systems, servers, appliances and other associated components related to digital data operations.**
- District restrictions:
  - **To be placed in Section 7.2 Specific Use Permits**

(2) **Data centers:**

- a) **Shall be allowed as a specific use in I - Industrial Districts, in accordance with the specific use permit approval process and chapter 16, Brenham Code of Ordinances regulating occupational licenses and business regulations.**
- b) **The use of any water-based evaporative process/technology to cool a Data Center and associated equipment is prohibited. Unless the water source is approved by the General Manager of Public Utilities and is not City of Brenham potable water, all water-based evaporative cooling tower or other evaporative chiller system which primarily relies on the evaporation of water to achieve its cooling function, either directly, or indirectly such as by cooling the contents of a closed loop chilled water system which serves such Data Center are prohibited.**

Additional standards are typically not adopted as part of the specific use permit process except for accessory dwelling units; however, the following additional standards could be considered for Data Centers:

- Ground equipment screening (wooden or masonry wall)
- Limitation of outdoor storage
- Additional setbacks
- Reduced parking standards

Staff requested feedback from the Planning and Zoning Commission regarding the proposed text amendments. The above outlined ordinance amendments will require additional research and discussion and can be evaluated as a single group of amendments or can be considered for adoption in a phased approach. Following review by the Planning and Zoning Commission staff will present the text amendments to Council for their review and direction.

*As this was a work session item, no formal action was taken; however, Staff was advised to proceed with the Text amendment process for the amendments discussed above.*

**8. Adjourn.**

A motion was made by Commissioner Alfred and seconded by Commissioner Smith to adjourn the meeting at 6:50 pm. The motion carried unanimously.

The City of Brenham appreciates the participation of our citizens, and the role of the Planning and Zoning Commissioners in this decision-making process.

Certification of Meeting Minutes:

M. Keith Behrens  
Planning and Zoning Commission

M. Keith Behrens  
Vice Chair

March 23, 2026  
Meeting Date

Kim Hodde  
Attest

Kim Hodde  
Staff Secretary

March 23, 2026  
Meeting Date