



Legislation Text

File #: 2024-305, Version: 1

Consider public testimony regarding, and an ordinance rezoning 57.15 acres out of the David Curry Survey, Abstract No. 130 from the C-1 (General Commercial) zoning district to the PUD (Planned Unit Development) No. 155 zoning district (First Reading)\*.

**HISTORY:** The 57.15 acre subject property is comprised of two undeveloped parcels currently zoned C-1 (General Commercial).

**STAFF REVIEW AND ANALYSIS:**

**Comprehensive Plan and Zoning:** The 2030 Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designates the property for commercial use. Data center is not a use that is defined in the City’s Code and there are recent precedents for permitting such use, and the accessory uses that support a data center such as electric substation, with a PUD in commercial zoning districts. Although currently zoned C-1 (General Commercial) which allows the widest variety of commercial uses, the PUD would amend the base zoning district to C-1a (General Commercial Limited) to limit the potential allowable uses for the site.

The Round Rock 2030 Plan addresses the need for the City to adapt to change. An implementation strategy associated with adapting to change mentions consideration for land uses related to modernization of communications infrastructure and ensuring the accommodation of more advanced networks. Data centers play an integral role in cloud based storage of data since hard copy data storage is becoming obsolete. Given the subject property's location on IH 35 and the policy to adapt to change, the proposed PUD complies with the Round Rock 2030 Comprehensive Plan for commercial development.

**Traffic, Access and Roads:** The PUD has proposed access along IH-35, Chisholm Trail Road, and Chisholm Parkway. The exact location of driveways will be determined during site development permit review and in accordance with city standards. The project will be subject to the Roadway Impact Fee regulations at the time of the building permit.

**Proposed PUD:**

The PUD proposes three parcel areas:

Location	Proposed Use
Parcel Area 1	Data Center or C-1a

Parcel Area 2	Electric Substation or C-1a
Parcel Area 3	Office/Warehouse and/or C-1a

The base zoning district for the PUD is the C-1a (General Commercial - Limited) zoning district which allows for uses that are more limited than those permitted by the existing C-1 (General Commercial) zoning district. Specifically, C-1a prohibits auto body and painting shops, self storage, sexually oriented businesses, flea markets, pawn shops, truck stops, and similar uses that are permitted in C-1. If Parcel Areas 1 and 2 do not develop as data center and electric substation uses, these areas may develop in conformance with the permitted uses of the C-1a (General Commercial - Limited) zoning district. Parcel area 3 is proposed to develop in accordance with the C-1a (General Commercial - Limited) zoning district; however, office/warehouse is proposed as an additional permitted use with this PUD.

The data center shall be limited to the height and setback requirements of the C-1a (General Commercial - Limited) zoning district. Building design shall be in accordance with the LI (Light Industrial) zoning district; however, additional design standards for articulation and elevation variation were added to the PUD that will apply to building facades that face IH-35.

Along the north property line of Parcel Area 1, The PUD requires a compatibility buffer adjacent to the proposed multi-family residential development as depicted on the concept plan “Exhibit B”. Adjacent to the fence is an eight-foot wide landscape buffer consisting of large and medium evergreen trees.

In the event that Parcel Areas 1 and 2 develop to accommodate data center and electric substation uses, additional perimeter fencing/walls and landscape buffers would be required and are depicted on “Exhibit C”. In general, walls would be required to enclose and screen the electrical substation and any proposed mechanical yards associated with the data center. Surrounding the substation, an eight-foot wide landscape buffer with densely planted evergreen trees would provide additional screening. Along Chisholm Trail Road and IH-35 an eight (8) foot wide landscape buffer consisting of large and medium trees and shrubs is proposed along the perimeter view fencing.

**Monarch Tree Removal:**

Parcel Area 2 contains three live oak trees of monarch size which are depicted on the concept plan. With this PUD, the applicant requests removal of the smallest monarch tree (tree #960 - 36” live oak) because the tree is located in the center of the parcel area and would limit the ability to develop a large footprint electric substation to support the data center use. Staff has supported this request due to the applicant’s agreement to preserve the other two monarch trees on Parcel Area 2 which are significantly larger (tree #963 - 49” live oak and tree #964 - 48” live oak) than Tree #960. To allow for large footprint and/or industrial uses in zoning districts that support such uses, it has been city precedent to allow for removal of one or more monarch trees with mitigation where the majority of monarch trees and/or the largest and oldest monarch trees on a site are preserved. In the event that Parcel Area 2 is developed to accommodate C-1a (General Commercial Limited) use, rather than the

electric substation use, tree #960 shall be preserved unless a separate removal request is approved by the City Council.

**Planning and Zoning:**

This item was heard by the Planning and Zoning Commission on October 16, 2024. The commission recommended approval of the PUD with a vote of 6-0. Three (3) Commissioners were absent. No citizens attended to speak on behalf or against the item; however, an email was received prior to the hearing that expressed concerns of noise, light, reduced property values, fire hazards, and adverse health and environmental effects associated with data centers and electric substations.