



Legislation Text

File #: 2025-326, Version: 2

Consider public testimony regarding, and an ordinance rezoning 29.69 acres out of the Willis Donaho Jr. Survey, Abstract No. 173, located on E. Old Settlers Blvd. near the intersection of N. A.W. Grimes Blvd., from the LI (Light Industrial) zoning district to the PUD (Planned Unit Development) No. 159 zoning district. (Second Reading)

History: The property was zoned LI (Light Industrial) in 2023 but has remained undeveloped. The developer requests to add data center as an allowed use for the northern portion of the property, however data center is not a defined use in the Zoning & Development Code, necessitating a Planned Unit Development (PUD) for its allowance and to outline various requirements. Data centers have been permitted on other sites in the city through PUDs which serve to define the use and establish development standards.

The rezoning request was approved unanimously on first reading on December 4, 2025, but second reading was delayed to allow time for the applicant to meet with residents of surrounding neighborhoods and work with city staff to revise the PUD.

Round Rock 2030 Comprehensive Plan and Zoning: The 2030 FLUM (Future Land Use Map) designates the property for industrial development. The PUD proposes data center and light industrial development which is consistent with the land use designation.

Traffic, Access, and Roads: The PUD proposes access to the site via a maximum of three driveway locations from Old Settlers Blvd. The location of driveways and potential transportation improvements will be finalized during site development review in accordance with city standards. Additionally, this site will not be permitted to connect to Chandler View Trail, a street serving single-family homes in the Meadows at Chandler Creek MUD that dead-ends into the south side of the subject property.

Proposed PUD Requirements: The PUD allows for data center and light industrial uses and will utilize the LI (Light Industrial) zoning district as the base district. The PUD divides the site into three parcel areas with different uses allowed for each:

Location	Proposed Use
Parcel Area 1	Data Center or Light Industrial
Parcel Area 2	Electric Substation or Light Industrial
Parcel Area 3	Open Space

As compared to the existing LI zoning, the proposed PUD will exclude the following uses in both parcel areas 1 and 2 to help prevent land use conflicts with the residential neighborhood to the south: auto body and painting shops, monopole and self-enclosed monopole wireless communication facilities, public safety facilities, car wash, indoor and outdoor shooting and archery ranges, commercial parking, self-storage, retail sales and services consisting of predominantly outdoor storage or consumer loading areas, livestock veterinary clinic, waste related services, and wholesale trade.

Parcel area 2 would allow for an electric substation but only if developed in conjunction with a data center on parcel area 1. It is uncertain at this point whether a new substation will be required to serve the data center on the subject property; that decision will be made by Oncor at the appropriate time.

Light industrial development on parcel areas 1 and 2 would be in accordance with the standards of the LI zoning district with the exception that loading docks shall not be oriented to face the southern property line, building facades in parcel area 1 that face Old Settlers Blvd shall meet the enhanced building design standards, and enhanced streetscape landscaping is required along Old Settlers Blvd.

The PUD establishes specific development standards for data centers, including the following:

- A requirement to use a re-circulating closed loop cooling system to minimize the impact of the data center operations on the city's water supply. This is consistent with the most recent data center PUD that was approved in Round Rock and prevents the data center from needing to continuously draw fresh water from the city's system. Instead, the data center fills its cooling system one time and re-circulates that water, only needing to top off or refill the system no more frequently than every two to three years. Utilizing closed loop cooling has shown that the water use for a data center of the size proposed will roughly be equivalent to that of 15 single-family homes over the course of a year.
- Data centers and electric substations are highly secured facilities with limited and/or no access to the public and low staffing requirements; therefore, no parking is required for those uses. However, if office is proposed in conjunction with the data center use, parking shall be provided per the Code ratio for office parking: one (1) parking space is per 250 square feet of office floor area.
- Development standards for screening are proposed for any equipment yards associated with a data center and for the perimeter of an electric substation.
- Parking lot landscaping and foundation treatment may be required depending on the visibility of the parking areas and building from Old Settlers Blvd. This will be determined at time of site

development permitting when the actual layout of the site is available.

Confining data centers to parcel area 1 ensures a minimum setback of approximately 500 feet from any neighboring single-family home. Further, the establishment of parcel area 3 creates a development setback of 80 feet that must remain free and clear of any buildings and parking, even if the property is developed as something other than a data center. This area would be left as open space to provide separation between the proposed development and the neighborhood to the south. Parcel area 3 may include stormwater management facilities, detention, and drainage infrastructure, however a 25-foot wide landscape buffer is proposed adjacent to the subdivision where not even those facilities may be placed. The landscape buffer must include an eight (8) foot tall compatibility wall and evergreen tree plantings.

On November 5, 2025, the Planning and Zoning Commission recommended approval of the PUD by a vote of 7-0. There were no public speakers at the hearing; however staff received an email from one resident of the Meadows at Chandler Creek MUD with concerns relating to establishment of an electric substation, potential roadway connection to existing roadway stub in Chandler Creek Subdivision, potential land uses on the property, loss of wildlife habitat arising from development, noise and light pollution, and any manufacturing pollution or impacts to adjacent property as a result of development.

On December 4, 2025, the PUD was presented to City Council on first reading. There were 22 speakers for this item.

On January 8, 2026, a neighborhood meeting organized by the applicant was held at the Marriott Hotel in La Frontera. The meeting was well attended by residents of various neighborhoods around the subject site. Skybox representatives began the meeting by making a short presentation on the project scope and then answered questions from citizens who expressed concerns including but not limited to: particulate matter and/or air pollution from generators, health concerns related to noise (both audible and low frequency), generator testing and operating frequency, invasive site lighting, and the potential for site access from Chandler View Trail.

As a result of the neighborhood meeting and subsequent meeting with city staff, the following provisions have been added to the PUD:

- Only one data center building may be constructed. It is limited to 250,000 square feet in floor area, 60 feet in height, and 75 megawatts of grid-interconnected power.
- On-site generators may only be used for supplemental, emergency, and reliability purposes, including but not limited to: utility outages, maintenance, testing, and participation in utility-managed load shedding or demand response programs. This ensures generators will not be

used as a primary source of power during normal electric grid operation.

- Generators shall only be installed in parcel area 1.
- Two rows of evergreen trees are required to be planted in the landscape buffer along the southern property line (as opposed to only one row). Large species trees must be a minimum caliper size of 4" at time of planting and medium species trees must be a minimum caliper size of 3" at time of planting (as opposed to 3" and 2", respectively).