



FAQ

The City of Waxahachie is proposing rezoning portions of the downtown area. Below is an FAQ developed by City staff.

Q: What is the downtown zoning proposal and why was it created?

A: The City of Waxahachie is proposing the Downtown Neighborhood to help guide future development for the City of Waxahachie downtown area. The Downtown Neighborhood area will be based on nine guiding principles.

- 1) Create and maintain a beautiful, safe, and viable downtown
- 2) Endorse a pedestrian friendly environment
- 3) Support new and existing downtown businesses
- 4) Sustain and preserve the historical character of the downtown district
- 5) Transition Central Area (CA) district to the Downtown Neighborhood (DN)
- 6) Encourage a family friendly environment
- 7) Capitalize on connectivity and access to the downtown district
- 8) Encourage creative diversity amongst the downtown district
- 9) Protect natural resources

Q: What does zoning do?

A: Zoning assists our city to continue to be a safe and desirable place to live, visit, and work. Zoning helps regulate what uses are permissible in various areas of the city. Within each zoning district, there is a set of guidelines specifying the types of uses allowed and the way in which development must take place. The changes in the Downtown Neighborhood allow for the buildings to match the setbacks of the surrounding buildings to match the character of the area.

Currently, there are various zoning districts which make up the area that is proposed to be in the Downtown Neighborhood, including Commercial, General Retail, Single Family Residential, Central Area, and Light Industrial. While many of the current uses will continue to be allowed within the Downtown Neighborhood, there are some uses that will be required to have a Specific Use Permit (SUP), which would require the approval of City Council.

Q: What is the rezoning process and how can residents and neighborhood groups voice their opinions?

A: All rezoning cases within the Downtown Neighborhood will be review and prepared by city staff and presented to the Planning & Zoning Commission, in which the City Council will have final approval authority. The Planning & Zoning Commission and City Council each hold a public hearing before voting. Comments made at the hearings are part of the official public record.

You may also contact the Planning & Zoning Department with questions at any time. Staff can be reached at (469) 309-4290. Staff can provide technical information about the ordinance or address any concerns that you may have.

Q: What was the decision process leading up to the creation of the Downtown Neighborhood zoning?

A:

1) Identify Issues and Create Vision: What are the concerns that the Plan should address and what is the vision for Downtown in the future?

2) Existing Conditions and Future Options: Background information and options related to existing development and design, existing streetscape, policies affecting the downtown, and existing economic conditions.

3) Alternative Enhancement: Different options for addressing the identified issues will be analyzed to determine how closely they align with the preferred future vision for the Downtown.

4) Draft Specific Plan: Develop a proposed Downtown Neighborhood Ordinance to present to the public.

5) Ordinance Adoption: Public hearings at the Planning Commission and City Council prior to adoption of the ordinance.

Q: What will happen to my taxes if the downtown zoning proposal is adopted?

A: While a zoning act has no direct relationship to the tax rate adopted by the City of Waxahachie, surrounding uses over time can have an impact on a property's overall tax value. There are three important things to note regarding tax values: 1) If a property has a homestead exemption, its taxable value may not increase more than 10% from year to year; 2) At age 65 a

property owners' total property tax bill is frozen and cannot increase, on a homestead property; 3) The City of Waxahachie annual adopts a tax rate for the City, but the Ellis County Appraisal District is responsible for determining overall tax values.

Q: What earlier meetings has the City conducted on potential rezoning of the Downtown Neighborhood and historic core of downtown?

A: From October 2018- March 2019, city staff has worked with Downtown Development staff as well as the Waxahachie Partnership Incorporation to help construct and present a detailed ordinance that is consistent with the guiding principles for the Downtown Neighborhood area.

Q: Will this proposed Downtown Zoning District make my existing property non-conforming?

A: No. If your property is currently legally conforming it will continue to be legally conforming.

Q: Will the design requirements for new development be different than the City's existing design requirements?

A: Yes. The Downtown Neighborhood Design Guidelines will slightly alter from original guidelines to help make the downtown area more pedestrian friendly.

Q: What happens if my home is rezoned from a single-family zoning district to Downtown Neighborhood zoning district?

A: If an existing single-family home is rezoned from a single-family zoning to the Downtown Neighborhood zoning district, it may continue to be used as a single-family home.

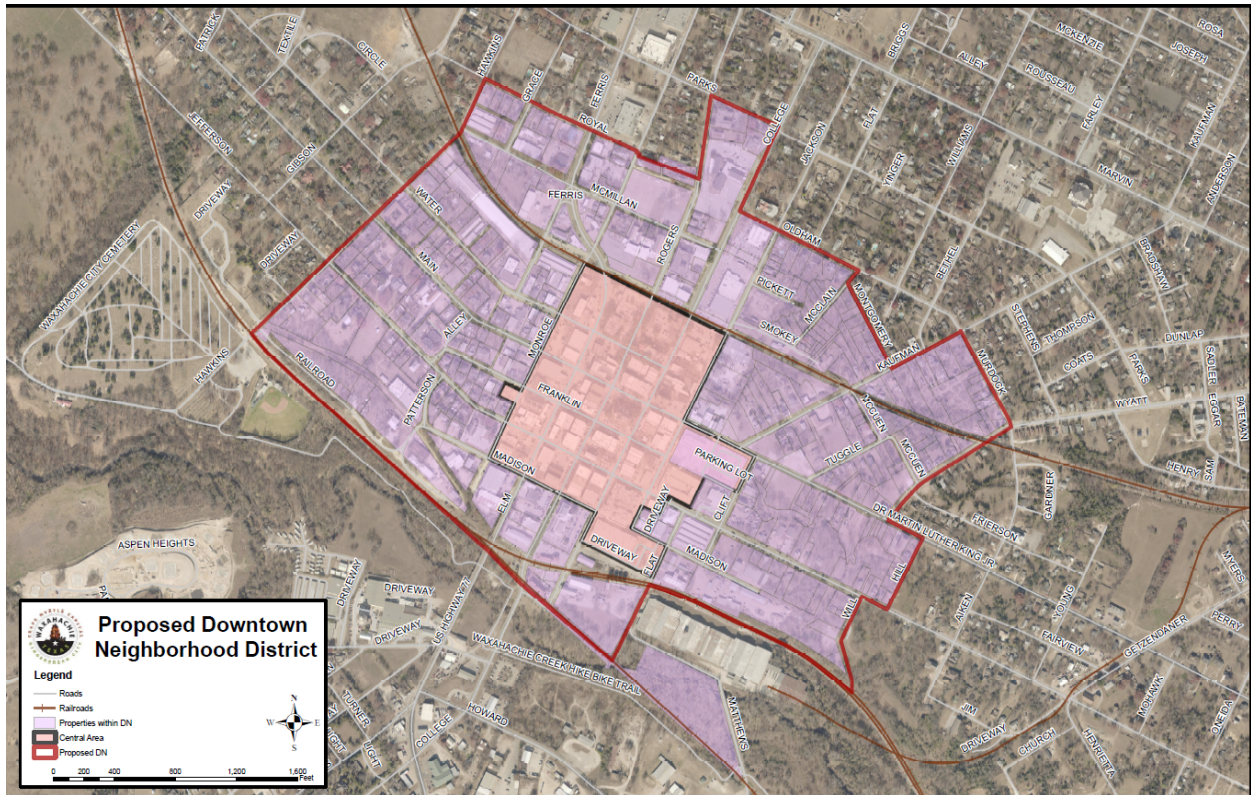
In the case that you may choose to use your home for certain other uses that would not have been permitted under single-family zoning, such as for office or retail, certain improvements to the building or site would likely be required.

Q: What is the process if I would like to remodel my business/home within the Downtown Neighborhood Zoning District?

A: Any remodeling of a structure, exterior and/or interior, shall be reviewed and ultimately approved by the City of Waxahachie Building Inspections and Planning and Zoning department. No construction shall occur without an approved permit from the City of Waxahachie Building Inspections department.

Q: What is the boundary or the downtown zoning?

A: *Please see the exhibit below*



Q: Do property owners need to apply for the Downtown Zoning District rezoning?

A: No. The City is initiating a comprehensive rezoning of all properties that fall within the Downtown Neighborhood district. Therefore no individual rezoning applications are necessary.