

December 3, 2015



Rezoning case no. RZ15-25: Blinn College West Campus

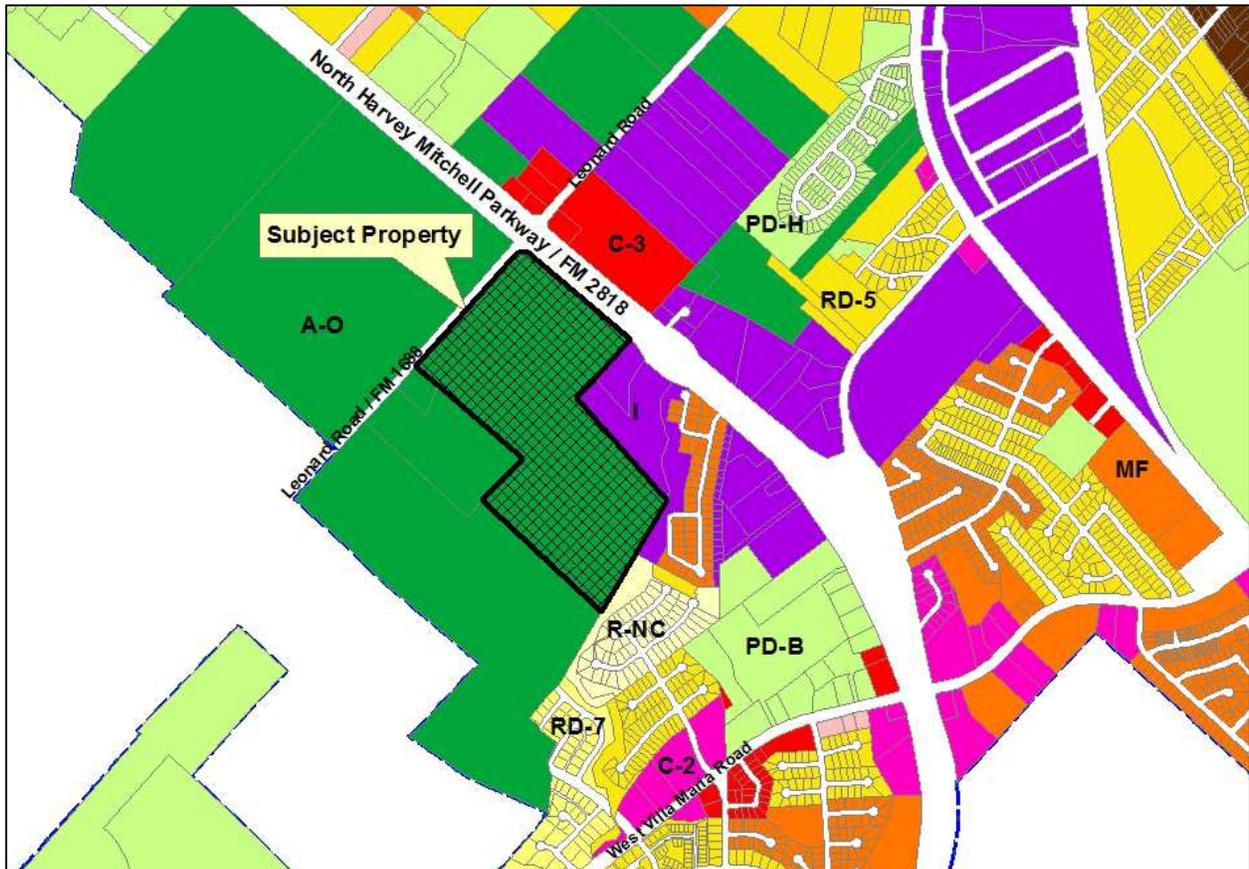
CASE DESCRIPTION: a request to change the zoning classification from Agricultural – Open District (A-O) to Planned Development – Mixed Use District (PD-M)

LOCATION: 95.29 acres of vacant land out of Zeno Phillips Survey, A-45, located at the south corner of North Harvey Mitchell Parkway (FM 2818) and Leonard Road

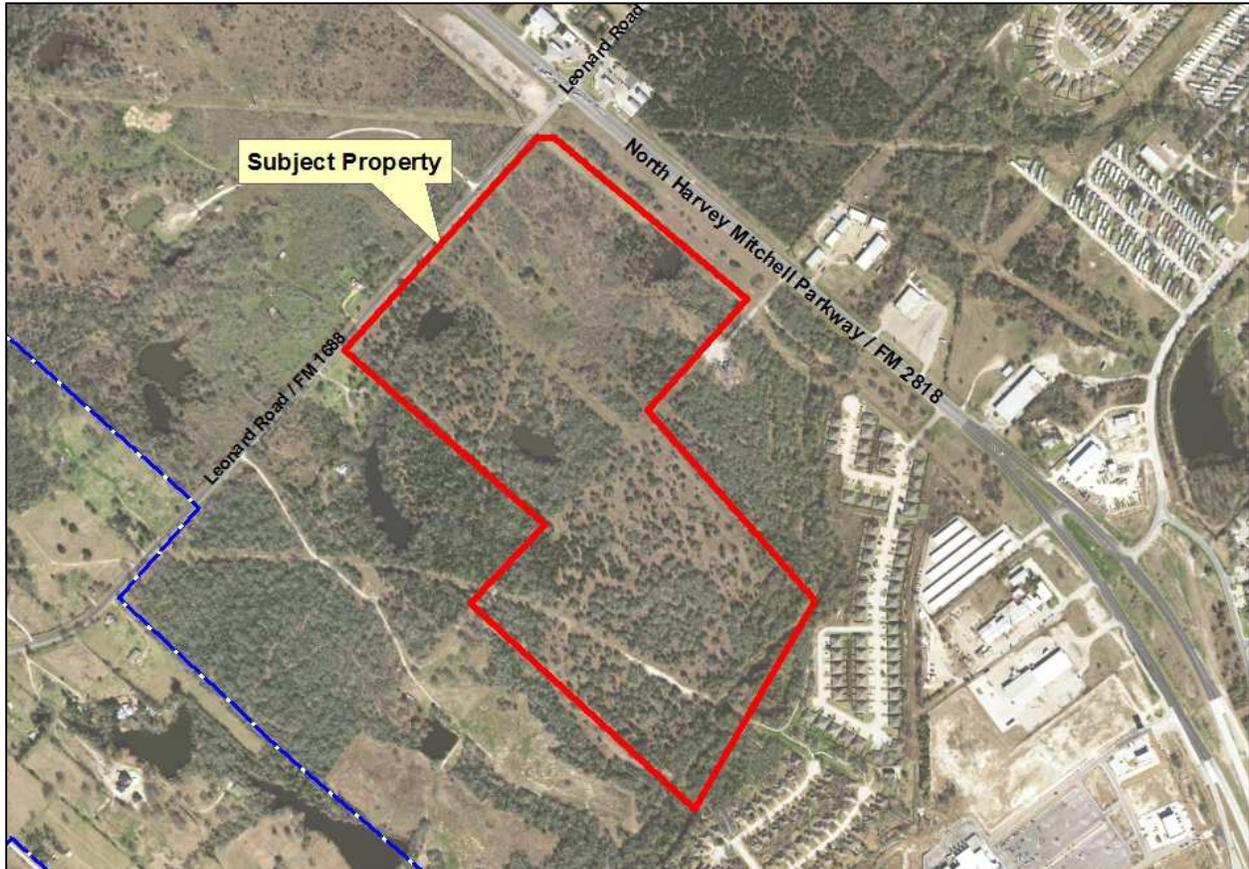
APPLICANT(S): Richard O'Malley of Blinn College

STAFF CONTACT: Martin Zimmermann, AICP, Planning Manager

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends **approving** the proposed rezoning.



AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH – 2015:



BACKGROUND:

The applicants, Blinn College represented by Mr. Richard O'Malley, own 95.3 acres of land adjacent to the south corner of North Harvey Mitchell Parkway (FM 2818) and Leonard Road. The management of Blinn College has determined that its current 78-acre Bryan campus, located a quarter mile northeast of the intersection of East Villa Maria Road and East 29th Street, has reached maximum capacity and expansion in that location would be ill-advised. To accommodate current needs and expected future growth, Blinn College has chosen a site for the proposed development of a second Bryan campus. The subject tract was selected in part because of its location adjacent to North Harvey Mitchell Parkway (FM 2818) and the connectivity that road will provide to the Texas A&M University campus as well as other parts of the community.

The subject 95.3-acre tract is currently zoned Agricultural – Open District (A-O). The City of Bryan Code of Ordinances, Chapter 130, Zoning, does not allow college or university uses by right in any zoning district, only potentially allowing them with prior approval of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) in some zoning districts, including the A-O District. Rather than seeking approval of a CUP, the applicants are requesting to change the zoning classification on these 95+ acres from the existing A-O District to Planned Development – Mixed Use District (PD-M). The applicants have submitted a development plan that would allow not only the college and university land use types, but also certain accessory facilities. In addition, the submitted plan proposes alternative development standards intended to produce a development pattern superior to what the Code of Ordinances would normally permit.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR BLINN COLLEGE WEST CAMPUS PD-M DISTRICT:

Land Use:

As proposed, this PD-M will allow only colleges and other institutions of higher learning that offer courses of general or specialized study leading to a degree, as well as accessory uses generally associated with such uses, for example, offices, housing for students, food service, laboratories, health and sports facilities, theaters, meeting areas, parking, maintenance facilities and appropriate supporting commercial uses. The development plan includes an illustration depicting the spatial arrangement of the permitted uses. If approved, the text of the plan along with the related attachments will be the document regulating development on the subject property.

Building and Site Design:

The proposed development plan includes general building and site design guidelines that illustrate the intent of the applicant. As the basis for standards regulating physical development, the development plan proposes that this PD-M District comply with development standards and limitations of the City of Bryan Code of Ordinances that generally apply to properties zoned Retail District (C-2). These may include, for example, regulations concerning density, lot area, lot width, lot depth, yard depth and widths, building height, building elevations, coverage, parking, access, screening, landscaping, accessory buildings and signs. The development plan specifies several exceptions to standard ordinance requirements, including

- elimination of minimum building setback requirements adjacent to interior lot lines;
- increased maximum building height, the maximum height being allowed at the building setback;
- reduced size of parking lot end islands;
- more rigorous screening standards;
- limitations to the number and size of allowed freestanding signs;
- a requirement of a 30-foot landscaped buffer along North Harvey Mitchell Parkway/FM 2818;
- a lower off-street parking space-to-student ratio, resulting in an increased amount of off-street parking per student;
- increased surface parking area landscape requirements; and
- an amended list of allowed landscape materials, eliminating invasive plants.

For specific details, please refer to the proposed development plan which is attached to this staff report.

Parking:

It is generally perceived that Blinn College does not have adequate off-street parking, as enrollment has increased over the years. The proposed development plan for this PD-M District specifies how off-street parking spaces and parking garages are proposed to be built as enrollment at the new campus increases. An attachment to the proposed development plan includes an analysis of building size, campus population and proposed parking arrangements laid out in 5 phases. The phasing plan is comprised of drawings depicting the type and location of future parking areas and a table quantifying each phase. If constructed as outlined, the amount of off-street parking provided would exceed what is normally required of the college land uses by between 39% and 56%.

EXCERPT FROM APPLICATION:

Rezoning Supplement A



Minimum Requirements:

- ☐ Metes and Bounds description of property
- ☐ If Planned Development required, then include 15 folded copies and a .pdf of the development site plan

Please list the reasons for this rezoning request:

The current zoning ordinance does not provide for college or university as an
allowed use in any appropriate districts. Furthermore, the establishment of a
PDD will allow for the development of a cohesive campus.

List the changed or changing conditions in the area or City which make this zone change necessary:

The tract is currently zoned A-O. Blinn College has purchased the property
for development of a western satellite campus.

Indicate whether or not this zone change is in accordance with the Future Land Use Plan. If it is not, explain why the Plan is incorrect:

The 2007 landuse plan identifies this area as commercial, industrial, and
office/light commercial. However, the proximity to 2818 and the nearby low
density residential make this an ideal location for this use.

List any other reasons to support this zone change:

The tract's proximity to 2818, adjacent residential, and easy access to Texas A&M
make the location ideal for Blinn's campus expansion. This development will
also spur additional development and re-development in the area.

RELATION TO BRYAN'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

The City of Bryan Comprehensive Plan is the framework for the establishment of zoning and other regulatory tools. The current plan includes policies and recommendations related to the various physical aspects of the community. These aspects are supported by a set of goals and objectives. For public and institutional land uses, the Comprehensive Plan suggests that such uses should be "generally located in areas that are generally convenient and accessible to all residents while providing buffering where appropriate" (Subsection 5.5. Land Use Policies).

ANALYSIS:

In making its recommendation regarding a proposed zoning change, the Planning and Zoning Commission shall consider the following factors.

1. Whether the uses permitted by the proposed change will be appropriate in the immediate area concerned; relationship to general area and the City as a whole.

A Residential – Neighborhood Conservation District (R-NC) adjoins the southern tip of the subject property. Land that lies to the northwest and southwest of the subject property is largely undeveloped and is currently zoned A-O District. Abutting property to the southeast is zoned Industrial District (I) and to the northeast, the subject property abuts the 300-foot wide right-of-way of North Harvey Mitchell Parkway (FM 2818) for a distance of 1,400 feet. The subject property's northwestern boundary adjoins the south side of Leonard Road, which is classified as major arterial street on Bryan's Thoroughfare Plan.

Staff believes that future use and development of this property with college or university facilities at this location will comply with the land use recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan which suggest that public and institutional land uses, the Comprehensive Plan suggests that such uses should be generally located in areas that are generally convenient and accessible to all residents. The subject property is located at the intersection of two major Bryan Streets.

Development of a new college campus on the 95+ acre property can reasonably be expected to impact the future development of the nearby tracts of open land and properties as well as the City as a whole. Staff finds that the subject property is generally suitable for the proposed college campus use.

2. Whether the proposed change is in accord with any existing or proposed plans for providing public schools, streets, water supply, sanitary sewers, and other utilities to the area and shall note the findings.

Staff is not aware of circumstances that would prevent this tract from having access to required utilities. Blinn College will be required to extend public water and sewer lines to serve the property in a manner commensurate with development. Staff finds that adequate capacity exists to provide these services. The fundamental transportation network exists to serve the proposed new campus. Plans for expanding and improving the transportation network as the campus develops, including the construction of a new collector street through the new campus, are currently being finalized. Staff does not believe that the proposed zoning change will produce a measurable impact with regard to future plans for public schools.

3. The amount of vacant land currently classified for similar development in the vicinity and elsewhere in the City, and any special circumstances which may make a substantial part of such vacant land unavailable for development.

There is currently no land available in the City of Bryan where college or university uses are allowed by right. There are, however, a number of similarly sized sites that would potentially be suitable for the location of a new college campus of the scale proposed. Staff is unaware of special circumstances that would make such land unavailable for development.

4. The recent rate at which land is being developed in the same zoning classification as the request, particularly in the vicinity of the proposed change.

Staff finds that the proposal to establish a new junior college campus is unique in the community and the likelihood of another such proposal in the near future is very small.

5. How other areas designated for similar development will be, or are unlikely to be affected if the proposed amendment is approved, and whether such designation for other areas should be modified also.

If the proposed zoning change were approved, staff believes there to be few, if any, effects on other areas that could be considered for similar development. As stated previously, the proposal to establish a new junior college campus is unique in the community and other such proposals are not expected.

6. Any other factors affecting health, safety, morals, or general welfare.

Staff believes that future use of this property as a junior college campus and associated uses, regulated by the standards proposed in the attached development plan, will not adversely affect health, safety, morals, or general welfare. Staff finds that the new campus, as proposed, will allow for useful and orderly development of this property and properties in the vicinity.

In addition, the Planning and Zoning Commission shall not approve a planned development if it finds that the proposed planned development does not conform to applicable regulations and standards established by Section 130-125 of the Zoning Ordinance:

1. Is not compatible with existing or permitted uses on abutting sites, in terms of use, building height, bulk and scale, setbacks and open spaces, landscaping, drainage, or access and circulation features, within the standards established by this section.

Staff believes that the development proposed with this PD-M District will be compatible with existing and anticipated uses surrounding this property and in accordance with the land use recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. Staff believes that the proposed use and development of this property should have minimal (if any) adverse impacts on nearby properties or the City as a whole and may spur additional development interest in this vicinity.

2. Potentially creates unfavorable effects or impacts on other existing or permitted uses on abutting sites that cannot be mitigated by the provisions of this section.

Staff is unable to identify any potentially adverse effects or impacts on other existing or permitted uses on abutting sites that cannot be mitigated by the provisions of the proposed PD-M District.

3. Adversely affects the safety and convenience of vehicular and pedestrian circulation in the vicinity, including traffic reasonably expected to be generated by the proposed use and other uses reasonably anticipated in the area considering existing zoning and land uses in the area.

The Bryan Thoroughfare Plan classifies North Harvey Mitchell Parkway as a freeway and Leonard Road as a major arterial, both capable of handling large amounts of traffic. Staff contends that the proposed development will have a decided impact upon the safety and convenience of vehicular and pedestrian circulation in the vicinity. Staff asserts that while the existing transportation network in the area of the new campus will be adequate during the initial phase, the development future campus phases will require investment in the area transportation network to maintain an acceptable level of service in the area.

4. Adversely affects traffic control or adjacent properties by inappropriate location, lighting, or types of signs.

Staff contends that the proposed development will not adversely affect adjacent properties by inappropriate lighting, or types of signs. The development plan submitted by the applicant includes standards, guidelines and regulations to specifically mitigate against negative impact from signage and lighting upon the adjacent properties.

5. Fails to reasonably protect persons and property from erosion, flood or water damage, fire, noise, glare, and similar hazards or impacts.

Staff finds that the physical development of the subject property will be in conformance with the proposed development plan and other applicable city ordinances. Since, in part, the specific intent of those ordinances is to protect the public and properties from such impacts, the proposal will serve to protect the public and property from erosion, flood or water damage, noise, glare, and similar hazards or impacts.

6. Will be detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare, or materially injurious to properties or improvements in the vicinity, for reasons specifically articulated by the commission.

Staff is unable to discern any additional detrimental impacts not already identified in this staff report.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends **approving** the proposed Planned Development – Mixed Use District (PD-M) allowing college and university related facilities on all land encompassed by this request.