



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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The Village of Salado is moving forward with its plans to consider rezoning the property that makes up the Mill Creek Golf Course in Salado. That is according to Village officials who announced their plans and a timeline for the upcoming zoning process today.

The Village is proposing to change the zoning of the 200-plus acre golf course from Single Family Residential (SF-7) to Private Recreation (PR).

It is unclear exactly why the golf course property was originally zoned for residential use. The *Future Land Use Map*, found in the *Village of Salado Comprehensive Plan*, labels the future use of the golf course property as Private Recreation (PR).

"The Mill Creek Golf Course has been in existence for more than thirty (30) years," said Salado Mayor Skip Blancett. "The reasonable and right thing to do is to change the golf course property's zoning to match its current and historic use and the designated land use for the golf course property found in the Village's Comprehensive Plan."

According to Village officials, the proposed zoning change will not impose any additional regulations that would require a change in the operation of the golf course. Also, the zoning change would only apply to that portion of the golf course located within the corporate boundaries (i.e., city limits) of the Village.

A privately owned and operated golf course, such as the Mill Creek Golf Course, is a permitted land use in the Private Recreation (PR) zoning district, which also allows for private parks, country clubs and other private recreational activities. That is not the case in the Single Family Residential (SF-7) zoning district, where golf courses are permitted as a conditional use, which requires a conditional use permit from the Village. Records show no conditional use permit was ever granted for the Mill Creek Golf Course.

"The discovery that the golf course property was zoned residential came after the Village was approached by the owners of the golf course about the Village possibly purchasing the golf course approximately six (6) months ago," said Blancett. "Once the discovery was made, the Board of Aldermen directed the Village staff to develop a plan to rezone the property in accordance with the Village's Comprehensive Plan."

The owners of the golf course were advised about the need to rezone the property during negotiations relating to the potential purchase of the golf course by the Village.

Both the Village and owners of the golf course addressed the need to rezone the golf course property at a public meeting held on August 9, 2018.

The golf course owners subsequently withdrew their offer to sell the golf course to the Village, citing concerns with the Village's plans to rezone the golf course property.

"The move by the Village to rezone the golf course property is not the result of the golf course owners pulling their offer to sell the course to the Village," said Blancett. "It is a reasonable move intended to recognize and preserve a historic land use around which Salado developed and evolved into the unique community it is today."

Zoning is a legislative tool that most cities use to determine the lawful uses and specific development standards for a property. A municipality can zone a property on its own or at the request of the property's owner. A property's zoning is subject to change at any time. Typically, properties are zoned in accordance with the land uses set forth in a municipality's comprehensive plan, which serves as a blueprint or vision intended to guide future growth, development, and land use decisions for a community.

Under the golf course's current single-family residential zoning designation, all or part of the golf course property could be subdivided into half-acre to one (1) acre single family residential lots with homes as tall as forty (40) feet. Any such development would have to comply with the Village's zoning, subdivision, and floodplain development regulations, along with the Village's building codes.

"The Board of Aldermen have a duty to preserve the property values in the Village, provide for peaceful transitions between land uses, and protect property owners from incompatible land uses," Mayor Blancett said. "The Mill Creek Golf Course is one of Salado's crown jewels. The Village wants to see the golf course continue to contribute to the quality of life in Salado and remain the economic generator it has been for years."

The upcoming rezoning process will take approximately forty (40) days to complete. Notice of the proposed zoning change will be published in the *Salado Village Voice* newspaper in early January 2019. In addition, notice will be provided to each property owner within two hundred (200) feet of the golf course property.

The Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a public hearing on the proposed zoning change on Tuesday, January 22, 2019, and afterwards forward a recommendation on the zoning proposal to the Board of Aldermen. The Board of Aldermen will hold a second public hearing on the proposal on Thursday, February 7, 2019, before making a final decision on the proposed zoning change.

Village officials are encouraging residents to participate in the upcoming zoning process by attending the public hearings or sending their input via email to: dferguson@saladotx.gov.