



City of Highland Haven
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AGENDA – PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION MEETING

DATE: June 23, 2025

TIME: 6:00 PM

PLACE: Highland Haven City Hall

1. Open meeting and Roll Call to Establish Quorum

Jackie Garrow, Chair	☐ Present	☐ Absent
Lorinda Peters, Vice Chair	☐ Present	☐ Absent
Linda Ray, Secretary	☐ Present	☐ Absent
Connie Smith	☐ Present	☐ Absent
John Novak	☐ Present	☐ Absent

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Recognize visitors.

4. Public Comment

(At this time, any person with business before the P&Z Commission not scheduled on the agenda may speak to the Commission. No formal action can be taken on these items at this meeting. No discussion or deliberation can occur. Comments regarding specific agenda items should occur when the item is called.)

DISCUSSION ITEMS

5. Discuss Comprehensive Plan

- Town Hall Meeting Topics
- Town Hall Schedule and Format

6. Discuss Legislative Issues

INFORMATION ITEMS

- P&Z Commission Member Comments.
- Next Regular Meeting date July 10, 2025.
- Items to be considered for the next agenda must be received by the Chair on or before 12 noon CDT, July 3, 2025.
- Adjournment.

Agenda Posted on Tuesday, June 17, 2025.

CERTIFICATION OF POSTING

I, SARAH COLLARD, CERTIFY THAT THE FOREGOING AGENDA HAS BEEN POSTED AT HIGHLAND HAVEN CITY HALL, 510 HIGHLAND DRIVE, SUITE A; HIGHLAND HAVEN, TX, ON THE INDOOR AND OUTDOOR NOTICE BOARDS OF CITY HALL, WHICH ARE CONVENIENTLY ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC AT ALL TIMES, AND THE CITY WEBSITE AT WWW.HIGHLANDHAVENTX.COM ON THE 17th DAY OF JUNE 2025, AND REMAINED SO POSTED FOR AT LEAST 72 HOURS PRECEDING THE SCHEDULED TIME OF SAID MEETING PURSUANT TO THE TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 551.



Sarah Collard
Sarah Collard, City Secretary

P & Z DISCUSSION

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PROJECT

SURVEY RESULTS TOPICS: COMMUNITY VISION AND VALUES

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

COMMUNITY VISION AND VALUES

1) Current Comprehensive Plan

Residents of the city have tended to consistently value the same things –

- a) peaceful atmosphere
- b) controlled growth
- c) lake LBJ and its resources
- d) minimal traffic
- e) low taxes
- f) no short-term rentals
- g) no multi-family housing
- h) no manufactured housing

Historically, residents have communicated that they want things to remain constant as to ambiance, resources, and growth. In the past, there has been pretty rigid adherence to a “no commercial/no multi-family” stance when polled on the topic of development.

2) Recap of Current Survey Results

a) Common Theme:

- i) In general, priorities and vision remain similar – residents value the quiet, semi-rural atmosphere, safety and Lake LBJ proximity, and express a desire to protect those qualities, even as they may vary in how to achieve that. 75% of 2025 survey respondents deemed it very important to preserve the character of the City.

- b) Changes: Comparing subjective opinions across the old and new survey results proves a bit difficult. The last poll of resident CP Poll was in 2004. given the passage of time, we must be cautious in measuring responses to similar questions. In addition, the new 2025 survey is more detailed, so there may be new information gleaned from the more expansive questions. It appears there are four major changes that should be explored:

- i) Survey results indicate a shift in acceptance of Commercial Development, (with caveats). In 2004, 25% approved; 75% disapproved.
In 2025, 35% approved; 34% disapproved, and 31% were neutral
This marks a significant change, and is an important topic to vet in Townhalls.
- ii) Some comments indicate that respondents are more accepting of higher taxes to achieve their vision

- iii) Continuing communication about the Legislative and regulatory climate is important, as it can negatively impact the ability to fulfill some of our most desired values, i.e. no multi-family housing, no short-term rentals.
 - iv) Survey comparisons 2004/2025 also indicate a surprising change in the raw data when comparing results on Multi-Family housing. Approval of 34% in 2004 vs 14% in 2025. It might be because we were more detailed in our queries on the 2025 survey; it could be because of the advent of STRs. A good topic to seek more clarity in our Townhalls.
- 3) Proposed Questions/Discussion Topics?
 - a) Commercial Development – priorities for Revenue vs. Administrative Costs vs. added water utility costs – we should make a short presentation outlining the challenge?
 - b) Is resistance to multi-family specific by types?
 - c) If the City’s ability to prevent unwanted development is lost to Legislative pre-emption, are there other options? Opinions on those options?
 - d) Changing the tax rate – what that entails. Do citizens support improving tax revenues through commercial development and STRs.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

1. This topic is briefly and vaguely addressed in the current Comprehensive Plan
2. Recap of Survey Results
 - a. Common Theme
 - i. Constituents express high approval of City communication efforts, but suggested improvements, including a more interactive website, short email blasts, text alerts, and clearer explanations of city projects and spending.
 - ii. There is significant confusion on the boundaries/duties/responsibilities/resources of City/HHPOA
 - b. Changes for Current Comprehensive Plan
 - i. Volunteerism/Community Involvement continues to wane, and must be addressed as a risk and cost factor in City administration
 - ii. Legislative and Regulatory pressure, Natural Resources (water) have become urgent factors that could impede execution of City projects/plans
3. Proposed Questions/Discussion Items:
 - a. What City Projects and Budgetary Items are most important to communicate? What format is most preferred?
 - b. How can we best communicate the City/HHPOA story?
 - c. What website improvements would assist communication?

- d. Should we seek more digital ideas like the Administrator Update for communicating with the tools and staff time available? Do links and digital references help?
- e. Should we consider periodically polling residents on urgent topics?
- f. Let's be honest – engagement at regular meetings is abysmal, except for “hot topics” and then only at decision points rather than during process. How do we communicate in other meaningful ways to engage interest, comments and suggestions along the way? (Maybe use budget process as an example)
 - i. Would residents prefer more detail on discussion items in meeting agendas when posted?
 - ii. Would a recap of meeting discussions in the newsletter or online be helpful?

SECTION 5

ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES

I. PRIORITIES

A. TOPICS

1. PROTECTION OF GROUNDWATER & OTHER NATURAL RESOURCES

Highland Haven relies solely on the use of groundwater as our water supply and therefore is the most important resource that our city has. The city's challenge is to efficiently use the groundwater available to us while preventing unnecessary waste of this resource.

Groundwater uses, both regulated or prohibited, are identified and outlined under the Highland Haven Drought Contingency Plan. Prohibited uses are defined within the Plan and are considered non-essential and the continuation of such uses during times of water shortage or other emergency water supply conditions are deemed to constitute a waste of water.

2. LBJ WATER QUALITY

Maintaining LBJ water quality is a key factor in the city's continued growth and maintenance of its outdoor lifestyle. It also offers a beautiful and desirable place to live for the city's residents. Environmental developments over the last few years, including the presence of zebra mussels compounded with the sudden overgrowth of nuisance aquatic vegetation and silt buildup within channels and shallow lake bottom areas threatens to harm LBJ water quality around Highland Haven and surrounding neighborhoods and communities.

3. STORM WATER MANAGEMENT

An effective Stormwater Management Program is essential to the protection of our floodplain and low-lying areas from surrounding development to preserve the natural resources of our city and prevent erosion. Stormwater runoff from suburban areas directly into Lake LBJ can be potentially harmful to lake surface water through the deposition of

harmful chemicals and substances carried in runoff water which could adversely affect fish habitats or detract from the natural beauty of lake itself.

4. OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION

Open spaces within Highland Haven consist of areas which are zoned as Agriculture, areas designated as parks and recreation areas, and undeveloped vacant lots which belong to individual citizens. These open spaces also serve as wildlife habitats for wild animals residing within the city limits.

While parks are important to residents, it is important to note that the City of Highland Haven does not own or maintain any park. They are managed by the Highland Haven Property Owners Association (HHPOA). The City will pass along feedback from this survey to the POA for their consideration.

Parks and open spaces are vital components of the city in the pursuit of satisfaction to fulfill the outdoor recreational needs of residents of all ages and their families.

5. OTHER MINOR CONCERNS

a. Protection of Wildlife Habitats

b. Noise Pollution

c. Excessive Light Pollution

B. PAST COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVIEW

The 2014 Comprehensive Plan identified Highland Haven as having two primary resources that can distinguish the city from other communities in the region. The first resource identified is its proximity to Lake LBJ, which combines waterfront parks and water recreational activities. The second resource identified included the existence of a number of residential lots located in the community and the shifting population away from the larger cities in proximity to Lake LBJ's location within the state.

Though most of the waterfront properties were developed at the time of the 2014 Comprehensive Plan preparation, along with the fact that most of the existing homes exceeded 20 to 30 years in age, it was noted that the city had begun entrance into the transitional phase of its development with the notice of population changes occurring at that time.

There were a few resource management projects that were identified as completed prior to the development of the 2014 plan. The bridge on Highland Drive was built in 2009 to replace the low water crossing that existed prior to 2009. Projects to manage stormwater runoff and improve drainage within the city were undertaken from 2007-2011.

An Agricultural District (District C) consisting of open spaces was established which divided the open areas into Area's A, B, and C. The original intent at that time was that this land should remain undeveloped.

Area A included a utility easement for LCRA and ensured that the area remained in its natural vegetative state with the restriction that no permanent building could be constructed with exception of an existing road into Camp Champions. The remaining section of Aea A could be left as agricultural or developed as a single-family residential district (SFR1) and/or park.

Area B is located within the 100-year flood plain and contains an LCRA utility easement. It is also identified as an agricultural tract.

Area C, located between Highland Haven and Shady Acres, is also an agricultural tract and is solid rock and was identified as land that may be hard to develop. An LCRA utility easement also is located on that tract of land.

Other areas of the city contain single family homes, undeveloped residential lots, boating ramps, and open areas designated as city parks managed by the HHPOA.

When the city was platted, no effort or resources were provided to design interior drainage facilities. A major program to upgrade the city storm runoff system was implemented in 2009 & 2010, initiating following two major rain events in March and June of 2007 which resulted in the flooding of 17 homes. Runoff infrastructure was installed Redbird Street, four locations on Highland Drive, Flamingo Circle, Bluebird Circle, Dove Road, and Quail Road. This program was funded 75% by FEMA and 25% by the city. The designs of these facilities were based on detailed hydraulic survey and analysis performed by the city and KC Engineering. This detailed engineering data of the whole city was developed as the basis for future storm water drainage projects. Storm water runoff projects were previously installed in 2005-2006 on Blackbird Drive and Crane Drive.

The 2014 Plan encouraged the city to apply for State and Federal grants that may be available to aid in future storm water runoff projects.

The 2014 Plan did not include discussion of Groundwater Management (other than storm water runoff), Lake LBJ Water Quality, Open Space Preservation, or other elements that could impact the environment and natural resources of Highland Haven.

II. TOWN HALL PREPARATION

A. SURVEY RESULTS

Eighty-four percent of Survey respondents indicated that the protection of natural resources, such as Lake LBJ, Groundwater, Vegetation, etc., is very important in our community.

Survey respondents were asked to prioritize environmental issues that exist in our city. Groundwater Management topped the list at 75.7%. Second on the list was LBJ Water Quality, with 68.9% of the respondents indicating this a priority. The following issues include Storm Water Management (41.7%), Open Space Preservation (28.2%), and Wildlife Habitat Protection (17.5%). Other issues identified in the Survey included Noise Pollution and the potential of Excessive Lighting which could potentially hinder the city from being a “Dark Sky” community.

Below are summarized comments generated by the survey respondents and resident discussion regarding the topics discussed above:

1. **Groundwater Management** – *Drought* - As a result of the on-going drought conditions in central and west Texas and the subsequent low levels of the Highland Lakes, Lake LBJ is becoming increasingly congested, busy, and a sought-after place for lakeside living and vacation homes. This has added a strain on the availability of usable groundwater for residential users.
2. **Groundwater Management** - *Drought* - Residents are asked to conserve water, yet new houses are being built, the effect of which adds overall water consumption when we are in drought conditions.
3. **Lake LBJ Water Quality** - *Proximity to Lake LBJ and associated navigable channels* - Some “No Wake” Buoys seem to be placed too far from the Shoreline. The concern is some homeowners have taken it upon themselves to move these buoys. If this is not the case, it would be helpful to have communication from the entity who developed the “No Wake” Zones to help residents gain accurate information and understanding about buoy placement rationale, as the current placement seemingly restricts that amount of lake surface waters available for recreational use.
4. **Lake LBJ Water Quality** - *Proximity to Lake LBJ and associated navigable channels* - Another issue of concern is that “No Wake” zones in channels are not being observed and are potentially causing channel bank erosion. Drought conditions have decreased the occurrence of lake-lowering for homeowners to facilitate dock and erosion repair.

5. **Lake LBJ Water Quality** - *Proximity to Lake LBJ and associated navigable channels* – Progressive vegetation and silt buildup in channels is compromising channel depth and water quality for individuals and swimmers that enter the water for dock maintenance or recreational purposes. Also, should future channel-fill deposition progress, the problem could prohibit boat launch and impair sprinkler pump function for those homes using lake water to irrigate their yards. This last problem could compound the problem with groundwater usage if these homes were forced to use city water resources for irrigation.
6. **Lake LBJ Water Quality** - *Aquatic Vegetation* – 40.4% of survey respondents identified aquatic vegetation in the channels and around the shores of Lake LBJ as a present and future concern. This vegetation has progressively worsened over the last several years, largely due to the presence of zebra mussels creating clear water conditions that enhance vegetation growth. A comprehensive aquatic vegetation control plan for all Highland Haven shoreline areas is something most all residents would welcome and support. Vegetation-free shoreline areas is something that benefits all property values as well as every other aspect of lake living. What options do we have to clean the lake bottom of muck, rid milfoil and other invasive aquatic vegetation?
7. **Lake LBJ Water Quality** – *Aquatic Vegetation* – Aquatic vegetation issues need to be addressed as a neighborhood. Individual homeowners in neighborhood canals pitch in to hire an individual or company to maintain the vegetation growth, but in some instances some of the individual homeowners refuse to pay their part, causing other individuals to help cover the cost of their non-payment. It is not fair for them to get a “free ride” for this service. But if the issues in all channels are not resolved, home values will decrease and people will leave the neighborhood.
8. **Stormwater Management** – While recognized as a main overall environmental concern in the survey, individual comments were not made by respondents. Stormwater management can be a serious problem in the event of heavy rain or flooding conditions, particularly in areas of sparse vegetation and construction sites, and has been recognized and mitigated in the past. Past stormwater program details should be updated and included in the new Comprehensive Plan document, along with information regarding available sources for Grants that might be available.
9. **Stormwater Management** – Some older homes constructed in lower lying areas are subject to flooding from stormwater runoff originating from uphill locations.
10. **Stormwater Management** – In the event of future commercial development of open areas currently zoned as agricultural, stormwater management will be key in those areas, particularly since some of these areas already exist in a flood plain.
11. **Open Space Preservation** - *Parks* - Develop improved infrastructure for outdoor activities in the city’s open spaces, such as cycling paths and walking trails, picnic areas, and playgrounds, which would benefit both adult residents and children in achieving active, outdoor lifestyles.

12. **Open Space Preservation** - *Parks* - Improve public spaces – Children’s Playground, Exercise Facility, Pickle ball/Tennis courts, Volleyball and Basketball Courts, or Shuffleboard.
13. **Open Space Preservation** - *Parks* – Establish better maintenance practices at existing facilities, such as the dock and boat ramp at Dove Park. Trim down tall bushes at Dove Park to improve the view of the lake and the overall aesthetics of the park. Develop low-maintenance landscaping in other city parks to give them more of a “developed park” feel and not just appear as a vacant lot. Sow wildflower seeds in selected open space areas to improve the overall beauty of the neighborhood.
14. **Open Space Preservation** - *Parks* - Establish periodic or seasonal community clean up events by residents in conjunction with the hiring of lawn maintenance professionals.
15. **Open Space Preservation** - *Parks* -it may prove beneficial to park development if the HHPOA could start collecting minimal annual dues or usage fees and use the funds for upkeep and to beautify our parks. Our volunteer maintenance crew has dwindled from years past as our demographics are changing. Has there been past investigation of the existence of Grants available to municipalities for park development?
16. **Open Space Preservation** – *Yards and Vacant Lots* - Tall grass needs to be mowed more often. Residents need to trim bushes and shrubs to code. Some properties are looking very bad due to lack of proper vegetation maintenance. Continued yard maintenance and proper disposal of items such as limbs, brush, and leaves by all residents are important in the prevention of improper stormwater runoff.
17. **Other** – *Wildlife Habitat Protection* – 17.5% of survey respondents are concerned about protecting wildlife living within our city. We need to achieve the creation of a synergistic environment between our human residents and our wildlife residents.
18. **Other** - *Noise Control* – There are still a number of dogs that create a nuisance through uncontrolled barking.
19. **Other** – *Light Pollution* – The city should adopt the “Dark Sky” model to control light pollution. The city could consider adopting standards requiring directed outdoor lighting rather than unshielded lighting and encourage its residents to do the same. Excessive glare from unshielded lighting or mis-aimed direct lighting can cause a safety hazard, light trespass, and decrease privacy.

B. GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. Groundwater Management

- a. How do we maintain a balance between groundwater conservation from existing residents and city growth through both residential and commercial new development?*

2. Lake LBJ Water Quality

- a. What options do we have to clean the lake bottom of muck, and rid the channels and lakeshore from invasive aquatic vegetation?*
- b. How can we create an organized, united, and synergistic effort between residents, the city, and the HHPOA to attack the aquatic vegetation problem in the channels and affected lakeshore areas of Highland Haven?*
- c. Would it be beneficial to establish a committee consisting of residents, city leaders, and HHPOA personnel to implement and maintain an aquatic vegetation program within the city?*

3. Stormwater Management

- a. How can the city ensure effective control of stormwater runoff in new areas of commercial development which will be located within low-lying and floodplain areas?*
- b. What can the city do to minimize stormwater runoff in downhill areas from areas of uphill new construction or home remodel where no vegetation is present or construction debris is not properly contained?*

4. Open Space Preservation

- a. How can the city and its residents, in conjunction with the HHPOA fund the development of existing parks into improved recreational facilities?*
- b. The HHPOA has already begun to look at park development alternatives through use of a survey. What can we do, as citizens and city leaders, to facilitate forward movement of that project? Would a special Highland Haven Park Development Committee consisting of residents, city officials, and the HHPOA Board facilitate forward movement on this initiative?*

- c. *Would residents be open to paying small fees to use and maintain developed parks and facilities? Would they be open to volunteering their time to aid in park upkeep and maintenance? Are there any Grants available from outside sources or agencies for municipal park development?*

5. Other Environmental Issues

- a. *What can we do to ensure a harmonious existence between humans and wildlife living in Highland Haven, and how can we establish better noise control of residential pets?*
- b. *Are there measures available to residents that will create less nighttime light pollution while maintaining our level of security and nighttime outdoor activities?*

C. CHANGES FROM CURRENT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

1. Groundwater Management

Groundwater Management was not included as an issue in the 2014 Comprehensive Plan. The city had recently established its own Water System with four productive water wells and was comfortably providing adequate water to its residents and other customers.

The impact of the drought depleting groundwater supply and the declining lake levels of surrounding Highland Lakes which have been water supply reservoirs, has risen to the forefront of environmental issues facing our city today and needs to be addressed in the future Comprehensive Plan.

2. Lake LBJ Water Quality

The existing 2014 Comprehensive Plan did not include discussion of problematic aquatic vegetation. Since the development of that plan, aquatic vegetation has become an important issue to residents of Highland Haven who live on channels and on the Lake LBJ shoreline.

Aquatic vegetation plays a vital role in aquatic ecosystems, providing habitat, food, and oxygen. Overgrowth of nuisance plants can disrupt these ecosystems. Nuisance vegetation can impact water quality by interfering with the natural balance of the ecosystem. Overabundant vegetation can limit recreational access to lakes and rivers, impacting residents and visitors.

A city comprehensive plan can include an aquatic vegetation management plan, which outlines how to manage and control aquatic plants in public bodies of water within the city's jurisdiction. These plans are crucial for addressing nuisance vegetation that can impact recreational activities, water quality, and other aspects of the environment.

Local plans can be developed in cooperation with state agencies like LCRA, TPWD, TDA, and TCEQ. Treatment proposals and management plans can outline specific actions to address nuisance vegetation. Plans may address both chemical and physical methods, including herbicide applications, manual or mechanical removal, and other strategies. Some agencies, like the LCRA, may offer rebates to municipalities and other entities to help offset the cost of managing invasive aquatic vegetation.

LCRA announced earlier in 2025 a schedule for property owners who want to treat invasive aquatic vegetation in Lake LBJ. This plan can be used in conjunction with the development of the new city Comprehensive Plan.

3. Stormwater Management

Stormwater Management plans are essential to any community since they are key in controlling flooding and erosion. They also help to control Lake LBJ water quality and maintain a healthy fish habitat.

The City has effectively controlled stormwater runoff, sedimentation and erosion resulting from land development in the past through its adoption and implementation of appropriate zoning ordinances and comprehensive plan policies. Going forward, the city should continue to implement these policies and plans and expand their scope to include possible future development of agricultural areas into commercially zoned sites.

The city should also continue to seek available grants from outside sources as it has effectively done in the past.

4. Open Space Preservation

The 2014 Comprehensive Plan contained little about the preservation of open spaces in Highland Haven, particularly existing parks or areas zoned as agricultural. The main reason for this was that the parks within the city are the responsibility of the HHPOA. Protecting the natural beauty of Highland Haven is a priority of the city. Community input has consistently supported putting the natural landscape, environment, small town atmosphere, and livability at the top of the priorities for the city. Preserving open space, improving parks and trails, and conservation of natural habitats is a cultural norm and

valued in the community. For these reasons, it is important to include the discussion of these open spaces in the new Comprehensive Plan, acknowledging the roles and responsibilities of the HHPOA and how the city and its residents can interact with and support the HHPOA in possible future development of parks.

Other open spaces in the community, which are areas zoned as Agricultural and undeveloped residential lots are under the jurisdiction of the city and need to be held to city standards. These areas also serve as wildlife habitats for a number of wild animals who live alongside our human residents.

Other minor environmental issues, such as noise and light pollution can be addressed through city ordinance revision or development through the city's P&Z Commission.