



**City of Dallas**

# **Private Game Clubs Code Amendment**

**City Plan Commission  
November 20, 2025**

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# Presentation Overview



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# Proposal



Consideration of amending Chapters 51 and 51A of the Dallas Development Code, Section 51-4.208 “Recreation and Entertainment Uses”, Section 51A-4.208 “Recreation Uses”, and related sections with consideration to be given to defining a use, “private game club”, and establishing appropriate zoning districts and development standards associated with the use.



# Background



On June 3, 2021, City Plan Commission authorized a public hearing to consider amending Chapter 51A of the Dallas Development Code with “consideration to be given to requiring a specific use permit for commercial amusement (inside) limited to a poker room”.

*Note: Pursuant to the commercial amusement (inside) definition contained in Chapter 51(A) of the Dallas Development Code, the use is applicable to a facility that is open to the general public. Therefore, it has been determined that a poker room operating as a commercial amusement (inside) violates Texas Penal Code, Chapter 47 “Gambling” which includes a defense to prospection for gambling that occurs in a private place.*



# Background (cont.)



**Mar 5, 2024:** ZOAC moved to send the item to City Plan Commission with a recommendation to not adopt the proposal.

**Aug 8, 2024:** CPC held this item until the second CPC meeting after the Court of Appeals issued its ruling on the case. The ruling was issued on August 27, 2024.

**Sep 19, 2024:** CPC held this item until October 24, 2024.

**Oct 24, 2024:** CPC moved to keep the public hearing open and hold this item under advisement until anticipated proceedings at the Supreme Court of Texas concluded.



# Purpose



The proposed code amendments are intended to provide a path to allow private game clubs to operate as an accessory use, by specific use permit and in a capacity that complies with State Law.



# Proposed Amendments



## Private game club.

(A) Definition. A private game club means a private place that is only open to its members that primarily offers competitive gaming facilities including games of skill, such as axe throwing, darts, or shuffleboard. Any games played with cards, dice, balls, or any other gambling device as defined in Texas Penal Code Chapter 47 are allowed only as an accessory use in accordance with Section 51A-4.217 of the Dallas Development Code.



# Proposed Amendments



- (i) In this paragraph, MEMBER means an individual joining the private game club. Membership must be for a minimum of a one-year time period. Members must meet more than de minimis eligibility requirements. Memberships must be limited in number and may not be transferable. Membership must be revocable for cause.



# Proposed Amendments



- (ii) All economic benefits, other than personal winnings, must come from the main use.
- (iii) Except for the advantage of skill or luck, the risks of losing and the chances of winning any competitive game must be the same for all participants
- (iv) A private game club use cannot operate in conjunction with certain use (see draft ordinance with case report)

# Proposed Amendments



- (B) Districts permitted. By SUP only in CR community retail, RR regional retail, CS commercial service, industrial, central area, mixed use, multiple commercial, and urban corridor districts of Chapter 51A and the SC shopping center, GR general retail, LC light commercial, HC heavy commercial, central area, and industrial districts of Chapter 51.



# Proposed Amendments



- (C) Required off-street parking. The off-street parking requirement may be established by the ordinance granting the SUP.
- (D) Required off-street loading. None.
- (E) Additional provision. A private game club use must comply with Texas Penal Code Chapter 47.



# ZOAC Recommendation



## ZOAC

Not to adopt the proposed amendments.

## Staff

Recommend the proposed amendment to City Council for review and action.





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