PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION AGENDA

November 19, 2026, 6:00 pm

Abita Springs Town Hall

22161 Level Street, Abita Springs, LA 70420

TOWN OF ABITA SPRINGS YOUTUBE CHANNEL

- Welcome / Introduction
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Roll Call
- Call for Agenda Modifications
- Acceptance of Minutes from October 29, 2026, meeting

PLANNING:

- No applications

ZONING:

- **Review Draft of Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment** to Allow Tow Yards and Vehicle Storage as Conditional Uses in the Commercial District, Subject to Use Standards.

- Public Comments
- Announcements
- Adjournment

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Town of Abita Springs
PLANNING AND ZONING DEPARTMENT

Planning and Zoning Commision Meeting
November 19, 2026

Proposed Zoning Code Amendment
Towing and Vehicle Storage

The draft amendment is presented for consideration and would update three parts of the zoning code.

- **Definitions** — Define the proposed use.
- **Table 9-302.2.1.1**, Use Table for Commercial and Special Purpose Districts — List the use as conditional in the Commercial District.
- **Use Standards** — Establish requirements for the site and its operation.

Order of Operations for Tonight: Staff presentation, followed by Planning and Zoning Commission discussion, public comment, and further Commission discussion.

Definitions

Zoning Text Amendment

Tow Yard / Vehicle Storage Facility

A site where vehicles are held pending release, retrieval, transfer, or lawful disposition. On-site dismantling, parts recovery or sales, crushing, scrapping, and recycling are prohibited. Detached vehicle parts, scrap, and junk shall not be accumulated. Vehicles designated for salvage, recycling, or disposal shall be transferred to an authorized off-site facility. Approval under this classification is limited to towing and vehicle storage.

Vehicle Salvage Yard

A property used to receive, store, or dismantle motor vehicles primarily to recover, reuse, or sell parts or recyclable materials. This includes storing dismantled vehicles and preparing vehicle remains for recycling or disposal.

Junkyard

A property used for the outdoor accumulation, storage, purchase, sale, sorting, or processing of discarded materials, scrap, or obsolete items, including scrap metal, appliances, machinery, and vehicle parts.

Table 9-302.2.1.1
Zoning Text Amendment

P	Permitted by Right
C	Conditional Use Permit Required
-	Not Permitted

PRESENT LANGUAGE

Table 9-302.2.1.1. – Use Table for Commercial and Special Purpose Districts

LAND USES	ZONING DISTRICTS				
	C Commercial	MU2 Mixed Use 2	MU1 Mixed Use 1	LI Light Industrial	CV Civic
Motor vehicle repairs and services	P	—	—	P	—
~~Towing establishments or junkyards~~	—	—	—	—	—

PROPOSED LANGUAGE

Table 9-302.2.1.1. – Use Table for Commercial and Special Purpose Districts

LAND USES	ZONING DISTRICTS				
	C Commercial	MU2 Mixed Use 2	MU1 Mixed Use 1	LI Light Industrial	CV Civic
INDUSTRIAL USES					
Towing and Storage Facility	**C**	**–**	**–**	**P**	**–**
Vehicle Salvage Yard	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**
Junkyard	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**

DEFINITION

Use standards are requirements that apply to a specific land use, such as setbacks, buffers, fencing, lighting, and operating limits.

These requirements must be met whether the use is permitted outright (P) or requires conditional use approval (C).

EXAMPLE

Sec. 9-303.4. – Bed and breakfasts.

A. The property owner or a permanent on-site operator must reside on the subject site and be on the premises during guest stays.

B. Guest accommodations must include meal service at least once per day.

C. Guests are limited to overnight stays of no more than 2 weeks.

FYI

Conditional Use

VS

Use Standards

Conditional Use — A land use that **may be allowed** in a zoning district only after the proposed use is reviewed and a Conditional Use Permit is approved for a specific property. The approval may include conditions addressing how the site is developed or how the use operates.



At the Conditional Use Permit hearing, the Commission reviews compliance with applicable use standards and determines whether additional conditions are needed.



Use standards establish what the site and operation must comply with. For a tow yard, those standards could address lot size, setbacks, screening, vehicle storage, and annual inspections.



Sec. 9-303.25. – Vehicle storage and tow yards.
Vehicle storage and tow yards are permitted as a conditional use in the Commercial District, subject to the following standards:

A. Lot size and location.

1. The lot shall contain a minimum of five (5) acres.
2. All outdoor vehicle storage areas shall be located at least four hundred (400) feet from the nearest state highway right-of-way line, measured horizontally to the nearest boundary of the storage area.
3. Administrative offices and customer parking areas are exempt from the four-hundred-foot highway setback in Paragraph A.2. All other applicable setbacks shall apply.
4. All vehicle storage areas shall be located at least fifty (50) feet from any adjoining residentially zoned or residentially used property line.

B. Access and circulation.

5. The facility shall have lawful vehicular access from a public roadway or from a private roadway or driveway where access for the proposed use is legally authorized. Access shall comply with all applicable Town frontage, access, and subdivision requirements, including restrictions on the use of servitudes for lot access. Where another provision of this Code imposes a more restrictive requirement, the more restrictive requirement shall govern.
6. Direct access to a state-maintained highway shall require written authorization from the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development.
7. All vehicle loading, unloading, and maneuvering shall occur on the property within areas designated on the approved site plan.
8. Vehicle storage shall not obstruct drive aisles, emergency access routes, required parking, or drainage facilities.

C. Fencing and screening.

1. All vehicle storage areas shall be enclosed by a continuous, opaque fence at least eight (8) feet in height.
2. Chain-link fencing with privacy slats, fabric screens, or mesh shall not satisfy the opaque fencing requirement.
3. Gates shall provide the same screening as the required fence and shall remain closed and locked except during authorized entry and exit.
4. Damaged or missing fence sections shall be repaired or replaced within thirty (30) calendar days of written notice of violation.

D. Exterior lighting.

1. All exterior lighting fixtures shall be fully shielded and directed downward.
2. No light fixture shall direct light above the horizontal plane or directly onto an adjoining property or public roadway.
3. Exterior lighting shall comply with all applicable Town lighting requirements.

E. Vehicle storage and prohibited activities.

1. All vehicles shall be stored within the boundaries of the vehicle storage area shown on the approved site plan.
2. Vehicles shall not be stacked.
3. The number of stored vehicles shall not exceed the maximum capacity established in the conditional use approval.
4. Vehicle dismantling, crushing, shredding, commercial parts recovery, and the operation of a junkyard or salvage yard are prohibited.
5. Scrap metal, removed automotive parts, and discarded tires shall not be accumulated or stored as a separate business activity.
6. Automotive repair, bodywork, and painting are prohibited.

F. Hours of operation.

1. Public business hours shall be Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.
2. Restrictions on public business hours shall not prohibit access, inspection, retrieval of personal property, or release of vehicles required by applicable law. The approved operating plan shall identify procedures for such activities outside normal business hours.
3. Customer transactions, routine vehicle releases, automotive repairs, and other business activities are prohibited outside established business hours, except where required by applicable law.

G. Noise.

1. Unnecessary engine idling, engine revving, horn use, and operation of equipment unrelated to active towing, recovery, loading, or unloading are prohibited.
2. Backup alarms and other required safety warning devices are exempt when used for their intended safety purpose.
3. All operations shall comply with applicable Town noise ordinances.

H. Environmental and drainage requirements.

1. Discharge of automotive fluids, fuel, or other pollutants onto the ground, into drainage systems, or beyond the property boundaries is prohibited.
2. Spill containment materials shall be maintained on-site. All spills shall be contained and cleaned up in accordance with applicable environmental regulations.
3. Vehicles with known fluid leaks shall be placed on appropriate containment materials or within designated containment areas.
4. Waste oil, automotive fluids, batteries, tires, and other regulated waste shall be stored and disposed of in accordance with applicable federal and state regulations.
5. Stormwater drainage shall comply with applicable Town drainage requirements and the approved drainage plan.
6. Hazardous waste processing, vehicle dismantling, and commercial waste disposal are prohibited.

I. Property maintenance.

1. Grass, vegetation, fencing, gates, and required landscaping shall be maintained in accordance with applicable Town property maintenance requirements.
2. Trash, discarded vehicle parts, and waste materials shall not be stored outside approved containers or designated waste storage areas.
3. Required landscaping that dies or is removed shall be replaced with plantings meeting the approved landscape plan.
4. All outdoor storage shall remain within the approved storage area.

J. Vehicle disposition.

1. The facility shall comply with all applicable Louisiana laws governing notification, storage, release, and disposition of towed or impounded vehicles.
2. Vehicles shall not be retained beyond the period authorized by applicable law, except where continued storage is legally permitted.
3. Vehicles shall remain within the approved storage area pending lawful retrieval or disposition.

K. Site plan approval.

1. Before the use is established, the Planning Commission shall approve the site plan as part of its decision on the Conditional Use Permit under Sec. 9-207. The Planning and Zoning Department shall review the site plan and submit its recommendation to the Planning Commission. The site plan shall identify all of the following.
   a. Property boundaries and acreage.
   b. Buildings and administrative offices.
   c. Vehicle storage boundaries and maximum vehicle capacity.
   d. Highway setbacks and residential separation areas.
   e. Access points, drive aisles, loading areas, and parking.
   f. Fencing, gates, and required landscaping.
   g. Exterior lighting.
   h. Drainage improvements and environmental containment areas.
2. Operations shall remain within the boundaries and capacity established by the approved site plan.
3. Any expansion of the storage area, increase in approved vehicle capacity, or relocation of access points shall require an amended site plan and any applicable conditional use approval.
4. All required Town and state licenses and permits shall be maintained throughout operation.

L. Annual inspection and enforcement.

1. Each facility shall undergo one annual site inspection by the Town's Certified Building Official, accompanied by a Code Enforcement Officer. The owner or operator shall provide access for inspections in accordance with applicable law.

2. The inspection shall verify compliance with the approved site plan, conditional use approval, and applicable standards for setbacks, fencing, landscaping, lighting, vehicle storage limits, access, and drainage.

3. The business shall pay the commercial site inspection fee and any applicable reinspection fee under the Town's adopted fee schedule in effect on the date of each inspection or reinspection.

4. The Town shall issue written notice specifying each violated provision, the required corrective action, and the compliance deadline. Violations are subject to enforcement under Sec. 9-212.

5. In addition to the annual inspection, authorized Town officials and other governmental authorities may conduct complaint-based inspections, reinspection's, emergency inspections, and other inspections within their lawful authority. All inspections and entry onto the property shall comply with applicable law.