

CITY COUNCIL MEMORANDUM

FROM: The Office of the City Manager **DATE:** September 8, 2025

SUBJECT: ZC25-0141, Ordinance No. 3920, Public hearing and consideration of a request from Wing Aviation LLC for a revised special use permit for a heliport/landing field at 6401 NE Loop 820, being 25.09 acres described as Lot 1R, Block 6, Tapp Addition.

PRESENTER: Clayton Husband, Principal Planner

SUMMARY:

Wing Aviation, LLC, is requesting a revised special use permit for a drone heliport/landing field in the Walmart Supercenter parking lot at 6401 NE Loop 820. The site is located on the north side of NE Loop 820 between Rufe Snow Drive and Iron Horse Boulevard, at the northwest corner of Boulder Drive.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Wing Aviation operates drone delivery services from the front parking of the Walmart property at 6401 NE Loop 820. The company received approval from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to operate unmanned aerial vehicles (drones) in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex for the purpose of delivering packaged goods to customers. The operations at the Walmart locations in North Richland Hills began in April 2024.

City Council approved a special use permit to allow a heliport/landing field on the site on February 26, 2024 (Ordinance 3842) for a one-year period. Drone delivery service was not a specifically listed primary or accessory use in the zoning ordinance, but the activity is similar in nature to a heliport/landing field in terms of operational characteristics, service demands, occupancy loads, and similar features. The original application was processed in a similar manner to provide the opportunity to review the suitability of the use and ground operations and improvements at this location.

City Council approved a revised special use permit on February 6, 2025 (Ordinance 3895). The revised permit approved an extension of the drone operation for three years and is set to expire on February 25, 2028. On or before then, the property owner may seek approval to continue the operations. Additionally, the revised permit required that permanent electric power to the landing field be established within one year, and construction of the permanent power is underway.

The request under consideration is to revise the special use permit to expand the drone operations to include autoloader facilities adjacent to the northeast corner of the building. Autoloaders allow store employees to place items for delivery into the equipment which the drone could load automatically without human assistance. The drone nest and landing area would remain at the same location and size. Since the addition of this equipment

expands the operational area of the drone service, an amendment to the special use permit for the site is required. A video describing the autoloader equipment is on YouTube at [The AutoLoader & curbside pickup | Drone delivery by Wing](#).

The existing drone launch area on the site is 3,800 square feet in size, measuring 30 feet wide by 126.5 feet long, and covers 39 parking spaces. The operational area is fenced by a black vinyl-coated fence and includes a storage container to store the drones and take-off/landing pads for the drones.



AUTOLOADER EQUIPMENT EXAMPLE



WING OPERATIONAL AREA – 6401 NE LOOP 820

The proposed conditions of approval for this special use permit are attached. Applications for special use permits provide an opportunity to address modifications to specific site development and building design standards for the site. These conditions are based on the applicant's proposed development of the property. These conditions may be modified throughout the public hearing process, but they are subject to final approval by City Council.

LAND USE PLAN: This area is designated on the Land Use Plan as Urban Village. This category promotes sustainable, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use development that provides the opportunity for many uses to coexist within a more compact area. Urban Villages encourage an efficient, compact land use pattern; support vibrant public spaces; reduce the reliance on private automobiles; promote a more functional and attractive community using recognized principles of urban design; allow flexibility in land use; and prescribe a high level of detail in building design and form. Urban Villages can come in the form of vertical mixed use, where multiple uses share a single, multi-story building; or horizontal mixed use, where a diverse set of uses are placed within close, walkable proximity.

CURRENT ZONING: Most of the property is zoned C-2 (Commercial) and I-2 (Medium Industrial). The C-2 district is intended to provide for the development of retail and general business uses primarily to serve the community and region. Uses include a wide variety of business activities and may involve limited outside storage, service, or display. The C-



2 district should be located away from low and medium density residential development and should be used as a buffer between retail and industrial uses. The district is also appropriate along business corridors as indicated on the land use plan.

The northwest corner of the property is zoned I-2 (Medium Industrial). This district is intended to permit a wide range of manufacturing, wholesale, and service type uses.

SURROUNDING ZONING | LAND USE:

DIRECTION	ZONING	LAND USE PLAN	EXISTING LAND USE
NORTH	R-7-MF (Multifamily)	Urban Village	Apartment complex (The Hills at Iron Horse)
WEST	C-2 (Commercial)	Urban Village	Retail store (Sam's Club)
SOUTH	PD (Planned Development)	Retail Commercial	Vacant
EAST	C-2 (Commercial)	Retail Commercial	Retail store (Home Depot)

PLAT STATUS: The property is platted as Lot 1R1, Block 6, Tapp Addition.

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION: The Planning and Zoning Commission conducted a public hearing and considered this item at the August 21, 2025, meeting and voted 7-0 to recommend approval.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve Ordinance No. 3920.