

ORDINANCE NO. 13-2025

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ABILENE, TEXAS, AMENDING THE, "LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE" OF THE ABILENE CITY CODE, BY CHANGING THE ZONING DISTRICT BOUNDARIES AFFECTING A CERTAIN PROPERTY; CALLING A PUBLIC HEARING; PROVIDING A PENALTY AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ABILENE, TEXAS:

**PART 1:** That Chapter 2 (Zoning Regulations) of the Land Development Code of the City of Abilene, is hereby amended by changing the zoning district boundaries as set out in Exhibit A, attached hereto and made a part of this ordinance for all purposes.

**PART 2:** That any person, firm or corporation violating any of the provisions of this chapter shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine of not more than Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000.00). Each day such violation shall continue or be permitted to continue, shall be deemed a separate offense.

**PART 3:** That the Planning Director be, and is hereby authorized and directed to change the official Zoning Map of the City of Abilene to correctly reflect the amendments thereto.

PASSED ON FIRST READING the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of January, 2025.

A notice of the time and place, where and when said ordinance would be given a public hearing and considered for final passage, was published in the *Abilene Reporter-News*, a daily newspaper of general circulation in the City of Abilene, said publication being on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2024, the same being more than fifteen (15) days prior to a public hearing held in the Council Chamber of the City Hall in Abilene, Texas, at 8:30 a.m. on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2025, to permit the public to be heard prior to final consideration of this ordinance. Said ordinance, being a penal ordinance, becomes effective ten (10) days after its publication in the newspaper, as provided by Section 19 of the Charter of the City of Abilene.

PASSED ON FINAL READING THIS 13<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2025.

ATTEST:

  
CITY SECRETARY

  
MAYOR

APPROVED:

  
CITY ATTORNEY

# EXHIBIT A

Change the zoning classification of the following described land from Central Business (CB) zoning to a Planned Development District (PDD-192) subject to the requirements set out in Exhibit B.

Legal description being Original Town Abilene, Block 11, Lots 13-15, Abilene, Taylor County, Texas.

Located at 1066 S. 2nd Street.



## EXHIBIT B

**Purpose:** The purpose of the Planned Development District (PDD) is to allow for uses permitted within Central Business (CB) zoning, whether by right or requiring a Conditional Use Permit, as well as a Distillery.

**Specific Modifications:** This Planned Development shall be subject to the requirements of the Central Business (CB) zoning district, except as modified below:

- a. The use of a Distillery, classified as manufacturing (light) (per Land Development Code), is permitted by right
- b. All uses ordinarily requiring a Conditional Use Permit to remain as such.
- c. The use of the site as a distillery subject to conformance with the Operation Plan attached as **Exhibit C.**

## EXHIBIT C

**West Texas**  
1541 North 4<sup>th</sup> Street



Abilene, Texas 79601

**Spirits, LLC**

The following information is provided to the City of Abilene to satisfy the request for an Operations Plan for Belt Buckle Distillery's location at 1082 to 1066 South 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. Downtown South property ID number **67006** includes lots **13-1(5)**.

West Texas Spirits, LLC is an Abilene-owned and Abilene-based company; registered and licensed for operations by the U.S. Treasury Department (TTB) and the Texas Alcoholic and Beverage Commission (TABC).

Belt Buckle Distillery is Abilene's first and this region's only registered distillery.

### **Our Business**

In considering the proposed business location, the City of Abilene is requested to study Belt Buckle Distillery's performance record at its previous location at 630 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Street. That location required a duplicate request for required zoning change and yields for the City's analysis a model business operation from 2019 through December of 2023. Belt Buckle Distillery will execute identical operations, in all aspects, at the South 2<sup>nd</sup> business location.

West Texas Spirits, LLC, the Distillery's owners, now calls to the attention of the city the reasons for moving from its previous address to the South 2<sup>nd</sup> location.

Though the business enjoyed an exceptional hospitality facility, the focus of the business has always been the manufacturing and sales of its produced spirits. Hospitality will continue to be a key feature of operations at the new location; however, an expanded production facility will allow dramatic increases in production for our distributor, Ben E. Keith Beverages. Further, the new location will facilitate an expansion of hospitality services in a historic, dedicated site that will enhance the area, be fully integrated into Abilene's tourism and hospitality industry. The new site will also offer capabilities of expanding in-house rectification and distillation processes that were impossible at the previous location.

With the appropriate zoning change from **CB** to **PD**, the South 2<sup>nd</sup> location offers new opportunity for Downtown Abilene, community enhancement and economic development.

### **Facilities and Improvements**

The South 2<sup>nd</sup> location will be bifurcated into two distinct operations.

**1066 South 2<sup>nd</sup> Street**, a single-story building on the property's east side, is the dedicated Belt Buckle Distillery production facility. This single-story building is ideally formatted for production with full access to adequate City water lines for Belt Buckle Distillery's **required** water sprinkler fire suppression system.

**1082 South 2<sup>nd</sup> Street**, the three-story historic building on the property's west side, is Belt Buckle Distillery's hospitality facility. Constructed by the Independent Order of Odd Fellows before 1920, the historically significant building will host Belt Buckle's popular Tasting Room on the first floor, meeting and activity areas on the second floor and administrative areas on the third floor.

In addition to enhancing the utility of all levels of the IOOF-Carpenter Building, significant improvement of the historic building's décor and attraction will create increased visitation by tourists to Abilene, increase regular utilization by community-based organizations and enhance perceptions of positive development in a historically under-frequented business area.

The building has been employed continuously as a bar/club venue since the early 1970s. Belt Buckle Distillery's acquisition, rehabilitation and repurposing of the property will be an emphatic improvement to this area.

## **Operations Plan**

Production activities will occur at the 1066 South 2<sup>nd</sup> property on a daily basis. The nature of those production activities will not be visible outside the facility; in fact, there has been, historically, no evidence of production activity to anyone outside the walls of Belt Buckle Distillery.

Operations at Belt Buckle Distillery has never been intentionally inconspicuous. That is simply the nature of our business and the distillery's production processes.

Primary permitted production activities are referred to as "**Rectifying**"; that is, the mixing, dilution, blending and re-distilling of spirits. The other production activity will be primary and secondary "**Distilling**" of spirits. These processes include the fermentation of grains or juices followed by distillation to create products for either barrel aging or immediate dilution, bottling and packaging for licensed sales.

These production processes are skilled and labor-intense, however only require a handful (2 to 4) of trained professionals to ensure quality and product consistency.

It is imperative to emphasize that these processes are non-intrusive; segregated from neighboring businesses and totally compatible with existing neighborhood business.

Additionally, per discussions with the City of Abilene's Environmental Lab Program, there is keen awareness of regulations and specific discharge limitations. There is no anticipation of current or future concerns for such discharge issues. The Department has been informed that they will be aware of operations via regular updates and required reports.

When orders made by Ben E. Keith Beverages have been fulfilled, their staff drives to our facility in vans or mid-sized delivery vehicles and execute pick-up of cardboard-encased product. These product pick-ups are hand-stacked and managed without need for heavy transport, though this is an option for certain deliveries.

Ben E. Keith then facilitates delivery to package stores and secondary retailers.

Belt Buckle Distillery can, by Texas law, only sell its bottled products directly to customers who come to our Tasting Room. This is accomplished at the rate of four bottles per customer per month, certified by detailed documentation reviewed by TABC.

## **Tasting Room Operation**

Belt Buckle Distillery's Tasting Room will rapidly become a tourism attraction for Abilene and a popular attraction for locals.

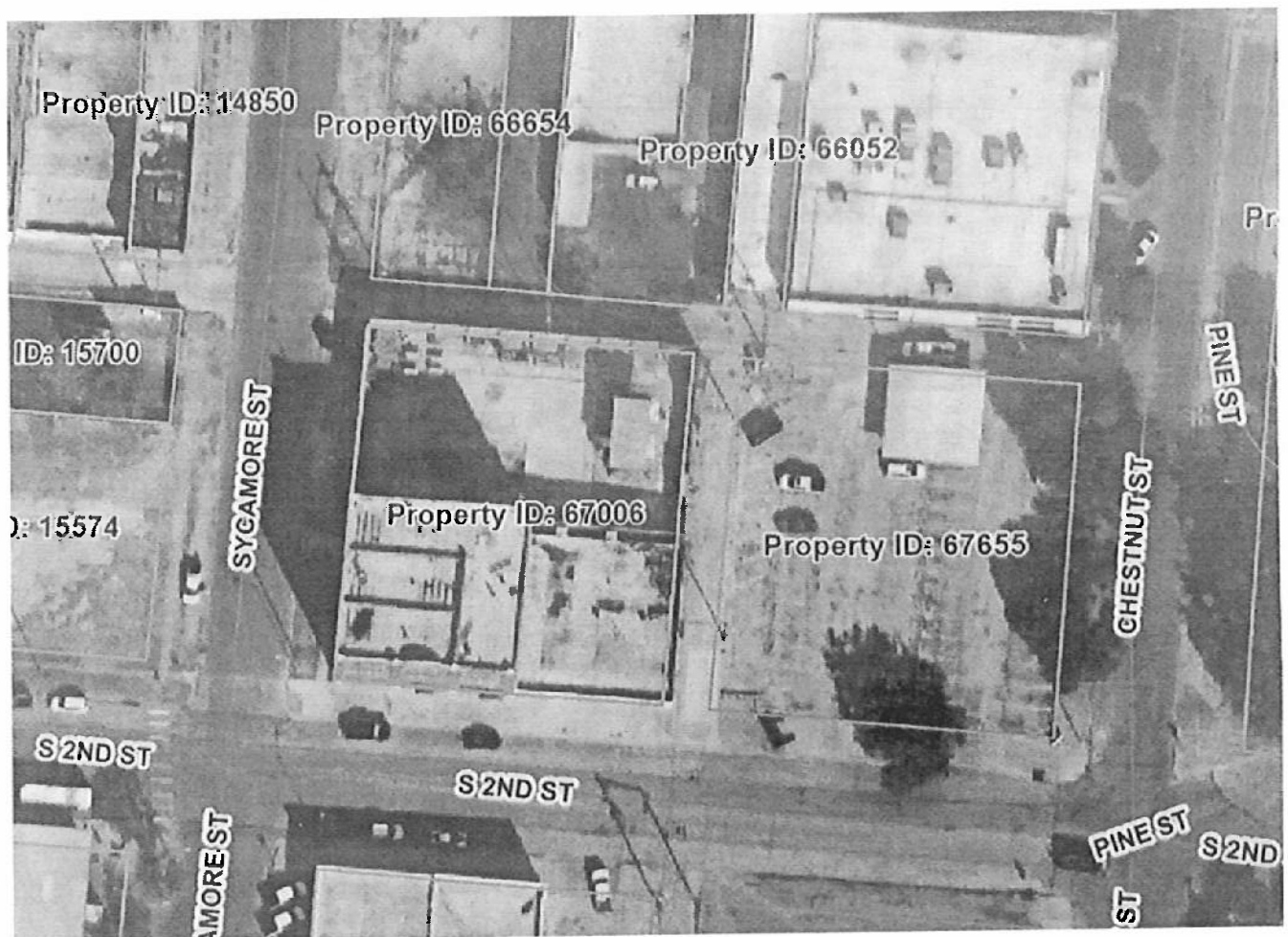
Though business hours may expand in the future, initial hours of operation for the Tasting Room will be Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 4PM till 9PM and Saturdays from 2PM till 11PM. No bottle sales are permitted by Texas law after 9PM.

Unlike the dance halls, clubs and bars that defined the historic use of 1082 S. 2nd Street, Belt Buckle Distillery's Tasting Room is a marketing facility for the Distillery; a relaxed, low-key classic environment to enjoy Belt Buckle Distillery product, enjoy good company and great background music.

A further distinction of the Tasting Room operation is the fact that by Texas law, Belt Buckle Distillery can only sell products, including all mixed beverages, which Belt Buckle Distillery manufactures in-house.

Belt Buckle Distillery has established a tradition of quality, hospitality and a "Friendly Frontier" environment that is highly anticipated as we approach re-opening.

This outstanding location will attract audiences of both visitors and natives, who will discover this much-appreciated time-machine in the heart of Abilene.



1082 – 1066 South 2<sup>nd</sup> Street

END