

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: August 7th, 2026



Atascosa County Issues Clarification of Prior Statement

Atascosa County - Over the past several weeks, Atascosa County has received questions regarding the County's June 15, 2026 statement in response citizens' concerns being voiced about the County's involvement with a proposed data center coming to Atascosa County. The County also held an informational meeting on July 7, 2026 to address citizen's concerns and questions. Since that time, it has come to our attention that additional clarification is necessary to ensure there are no further confusion regarding that matter.

The County's intent with the original statement was to address the citizens' concern voiced about a specific project, "Energy Ranch", the focus of widespread public discussion at that time. The statement reflected the information known by the County regarding that particular project at that point in time.

Like many growing counties throughout Texas, Atascosa County periodically receives inquiries from developers representing a variety of industries. Meeting with prospective developers, landowners, business representatives, utility providers, and other stakeholders is a routine and appropriate function of county government. These preliminary conversations allow County officials to better understand potential future developments, explain the County's authority under Texas law, identify infrastructure or public safety considerations, and direct applicants to the appropriate agencies and permitting processes. These meetings are informational in nature, do not involve a quorum of Commissioners Court, are not meetings of Commissioners Court, and do not constitute County approval, endorsement, or a commitment to support a project.

These preliminary discussions are separate from the official actions of Commissioners Court and often occur before a proposal or agreement is ready for public consideration. In many cases, projects change, relocate, or do not move forward at all. Only matters requiring official County action are brought before Commissioners Court during a properly posted public meeting in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act.

Since the June 15, 2026, statement was issued, Judge Weldon P. Cude has publicly clarified on multiple occasions that many prospective developers have met with him, and he has never represented otherwise. As confirmed by records released under the Texas Public Information Act, those meetings occurred as part of the normal course of county business and do not indicate that any project has been approved or endorsed by Commissioners Court. At this time, Commissioners Court has not received a request for County action regarding a data center project.

After questions arose regarding Energy Ranch, Judge Weldon P. Cude contacted the property owner to better understand the information circulating publicly. The property owner subsequently stated publicly that particular project was not located in Atascosa County.

As public concern continued to grow, the County expanded its efforts to keep residents informed. Those efforts included attending community meetings to hear from residents, hosting the July 7, 2026, Public Information Meeting at the Justice Center with subject matter experts and partner agencies, answering questions from residents both in person and online, and making factual information, presentation materials, and meeting recordings publicly available, including through responses to Public Information Act requests.

Throughout this process, Atascosa County remains committed to providing factual information based on the information available at the time of each communication and within the County's legal authority to discuss. Under Texas law, private land transactions between willing buyers and willing sellers are generally private matters and are not subject to approval by Commissioners Court unless the County approval or authorization is required by law.

In hindsight, specifically identifying the project that prompted the June 15, 2026, statement may have reduced confusion. While Atascosa County's intent was to respond to the project, Energy Ranch, receiving widespread public attention at that time, we recognize that additional specificity could have provided greater clarity. As a result, we are taking additional steps to strengthen transparency and communication moving forward.

Those efforts include:

- Hosting public information meetings to address significant community questions;
- Educating residents about the County's authority under Texas law regarding private development;
- Continuing to livestream Commissioners Court meetings and provide meeting recaps;
- Providing additional public information through the County Judge Weldon P. Cude's Office and County communication channels;
- Creating a Development Transparency & Community Engagement Guide to encourage early communication between developers, neighboring property owners, and the public; and
- Continuing to provide factual information through Official County communication channels.
 - Atascosa County Facebook Page
 - Atascosa County YouTube - Commissioners Court Livestream & Recordings
 - Atascosa County Website: co.atascosa.tx.us
 - Commissioners Court Agendas & Minutes
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Transparency is not defined by a single press release or one public meeting—it is an ongoing commitment to conducting the county government business openly and providing accurate information.

That commitment requires accuracy. Atascosa County has a responsibility to communicate verified information rather than speculation or rumor. It also means acknowledging when additional clarification is helpful.

Atascosa County Commissioners Court remains committed to transparency, communication, and public engagement. We will continue providing factual information through Official County communication channels while helping residents better understand the County's role, responsibilities, and legal authority under Texas law.

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Atascosa County

Timeline of Events



Before June 15, 2026

Routine Inquiries & Preliminary Meetings

Atascosa County, like many growing counties, periodically receives inquiries from developers and holds preliminary meetings with prospective developers, landowners, business representatives, utility providers, and other stakeholders. These meetings are part of the normal course of county business and do not indicate approval or endorsement of any project.



June 15, 2026

Public Statement Issued

Atascosa County issued a public statement regarding the specific project, Energy Ranch, which was the focus of widespread public discussion at that time. The statement reflected the information available to the County at that time.



After June 15, 2026

Atascosa County Judge Weldon P. Cude Publicly Clarifies

Judge Cude publicly clarified on multiple occasions that prospective developers have met with him and he has never represented otherwise. As confirmed by records released under the Texas Public Information Act, those meetings were part of the normal course of county business and do not indicate that any project has been approved or endorsed by Commissioners Court. At this time, Commissioners Court has not received a request for county action regarding a data center project.



After Questions Arose

Contact with Property Owner

After questions arose regarding the project, Atascosa County Judge Weldon P. Cude contacted the property owner to better understand the information circulating publicly. The property owner subsequently stated publicly that the project was not located in Atascosa County.



As Public Interest Continued to Grow

Expanded Public Engagement

The County expanded its efforts to keep residents informed, including attending community meetings, hosting the Atascosa County Judge Weldon P. Cude Public Information Meeting with local businesses, financial agencies, answering questions from residents in person and online, and making factual information, presentation materials, and meeting recordings publicly available, including through responses to Public Information Act requests.



Looking Forward

Strengthening Transparency & Communication

- Hosting public information meetings to address significant community questions;
- Educating residents about the County's authority under Texas law regarding private development;
- Continuing to livestream Commissioners Court meetings and provide meeting recaps;
- Creating a Developer Transparency & Community Engagement Guide to encourage early communication between developers, neighboring property owners, and the public; and
- Continuing to provide factual information through Official County communication channels.
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Ongoing Commitment

Transparency, Accuracy, Public Trust

Atascosa County Commissioners Court remains committed to transparency, factual communication, and public engagement. We will continue providing factual information through official County communication channels while helping residents better understand the County's role, responsibilities, and legal authority under Texas law.

Atascosa County Commissioner Court remains committed to transparency, factual communication, and public engagement. We will continue providing factual information through Official County communication channels while helping residents better understand the County's role, responsibilities, and legal authority under Texas law.