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ALERT TOP STORY

Project Anthem

Project Anthem developer asks to postpone Planning Commission hearing until April 1

Mar 13, 2026



The developer of Project Anthem, a massive data center planned for construction on 340 acres near the intersection of 11th Street and the Creek Turnpike, is expected to ask for postponement of a rezoning hearing on 375 acres directly west of the property to construct another data center.

Mike Simons, Tulsa World Archive

By Kevin Canfield

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The developer of Project Anthem, a massive data center planned for construction on 340 acres in east Tulsa, plans to ask the Tulsa Metropolitan Area Planning Office to continue until April 1 a hearing on proposed rezoning changes needed to expand the project.

The hearing had been scheduled for Wednesday.

Planning Commission staff was notified Friday of the developer's intent to seek the continuation. Commissioners will vote on that request Wednesday.

A representative for Project Anthem was not available for comment Friday.

When the case is heard, the Planning Commission will provide a recommendation to the City Council, which has the final say on rezoning requests.

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The original application submitted to the Planning Commission included two requests: to rezone the 375 acres from agriculture to industrial light, and to change the property's designation in the city's comprehensive plan from neighborhood to employment.

The reason for the rezoning requests is to construct another data center, according to the application.

The property is directly west of the 340-acre site on which the original Project Anthem data center is to be built.

The developer's request to postpone the hearing **comes just two days after city councilors discussed whether to impose a 365-day moratorium** on the construction of new data centers. The proposal would exempt the original Anthem data center from the moratorium.

At the same meeting, some councilors stated they would not support granting additional incentives for phase two of the Anthem project, should the rezoning request be granted.

Meanwhile, the City's Planning Office, which staffs the Planning Commission, is recommending denial of Anthem's rezoning requests.

The recommendation notes that the proposed development site is not adjacent to a highway and would extend beyond the floodplain buffer that is part of the original data center property.

"IL (Industrial Light) zoning would not be consistent with the neighborhood land use designation which is intended to accommodate primarily residential uses," the recommendation states.

Councilor Laura Bellis, who proposed the data center moratorium, said she was not certain why the continuance was requested but that her understanding was that Anthem might be looking to expand in a different geographic direction.

The tech company behind the project has not been made public, but several indicators suggest it is likely Meta. For example, the Project Anthem preliminary plat application filed with the Planning Commission for the original 340-acre property includes a contact name and telephone number for a Meta employee.

The development site is south and west of the intersection of 11th Street and the

Creek Turnpike, at Fair Oaks Industrial Park, a 2,000-acre development area central to the city's efforts to establish a hub for the advanced mobility industry.

The developer is listed as Atmos LLC, a Delaware-based company.

Late Friday, Erran Persley, the city's economic development director, shed more light on why the continuance was requested, saying Project Anthem is looking at properties potentially associated with the 6,229-acre master planned development approved by city councilors on Wednesday.

The applicants, Fair Oaks Ranch, LLC and Rob-Wal, LLC, plan to construct a mixed-use development comprising commercial, residential and industrial uses.

“At this point, Anthem is just exploring their options in and around that piece of property,” Persley said. “The City Council passed the MPD, and part of that property close to where Anthem is currently located, or looking at, is already zoned in an area where they could do exactly what they're doing without going through a rezoning process.”

Should Anthem's continuance to April 1 be granted, the Planning Commission hearing would be held at 1 p.m. in City Council chambers of City Hall, 175 E. Second St.

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