
CITY OF PORT LAVACA

MEETING **MARCH 09, 2026**

DATE: 3/2/2026

TO: MANDY GRANT

FROM: TANIA FRENCH

SUBJECT: VEHICLE ACCESS INSIDE BAUER COMMUNITY CENTER

The City has received a request from Snappy Company, owned by Jake and Mackenzie Garrett, seeking permission to bring a van into the Bauer Community Center as part of a mobile photo booth setup for private events.

I met with the owners to discuss the request and measure access points within the facility. The van measures 58 inches at its widest point. The narrowest door opening at the Bauer is 64 inches (rear entrance), and the widest opening is 66 inches (chamber-side entrance). While the vehicle would technically fit through both openings, clearance would be minimal.

BACKGROUND

Prior to Hurricane Harvey, the rear of the Bauer Community Center included a roll-up door. During post-Harvey renovations, the roll-up door was removed after city leadership at the time determined the building was not designed to accommodate vehicles.

CONCERNS

I have discussed this request with Wayne Shaffer and Joe Reyes. Collectively, we have identified the following concerns:

1. The Bauer does not have an adequate ventilation system to safely exhaust vehicle fumes.
2. The building does not have a sprinkler system.
3. Clearance at the widest entrance would be minimal, creating potential for damage to door frames or the structure.
4. The vehicle would need to travel across tile flooring to enter the facility, which could result in floor damage.
5. There is potential for both property damage and personal injury.

COMPARISON TO OTHER FACILITIES

The City of Victoria does allow vehicles inside the Victoria Community Center; however, the building is better suited for such use. The Victoria Fire Marshal requires the following precautions:

- Plywood or other hard, absorbent material placed beneath the vehicle to protect flooring and absorb potential oil or fuel leaks.
- Battery cables disconnected from the battery.
- Fuel door taped shut if the fuel cap does not lock.
- Lessee shall not store any motor fuel in the Community Center.
- Fuel tanks, boats, vehicles, or equipment on display will be secured in accordance with instructions by the Fire Marshal.

RENTAL IMPACT

While the inclusion of a vehicle inside the building would be unique, it is not anticipated to increase rentals. In January and February, the Bauer was fully booked on weekends. Currently, only two weekends remain available between now and the end of the year (August 15 and October 31).

Staff believes the same novelty could be achieved by positioning the van near the entrance of the Bauer, rather than inside the facility.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The City does not currently have established rules or guidelines regarding vehicles inside the Bauer Community Center. Therefore, staff is seeking Council direction on the following:

1. Does Council wish to allow vehicles inside the Bauer Community Center?
2. If allowed, what guidelines and insurance requirements should be established?

Should Council choose to permit vehicles inside the building, staff recommends adopting, at minimum, the City of Victoria Fire Marshal's guidelines listed above. In addition, we recommend requiring general liability insurance in the minimum amount of \$1,000,000.00 to protect the City against loss from liability imposed by law for bodily injury and/or property damage.

Such insurance should name the City of Port Lavaca, its officers, employees, agents, and, if required, any other public entity involved in the event, as additional insured by separate endorsement for the duration of the event.

We respectfully request Council's guidance and direction on this matter.