

**GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA FOR GRANTING TAX ABATEMENT  
IN A REINVESTMENT ZONE CREATED IN BRAZORIA COUNTY**

**WHEREAS**, the creation, retention and diversification of job opportunities that bring new wealth are among the highest civic priority; and

**WHEREAS**, the purpose of tax abatement is to provide an incentive offered by the tax-payers, i.e. citizens of Brazoria County, to attract investments, that lead to better quality of life and better services. The wealth created by these enterprises leads to more service and retail businesses, which in addition to improving quality of life, increases the tax base. In summary, by giving incentive in terms of tax abatement, the citizens agree to give up short term tax benefits, for long term benefits; and

**WHEREAS**, new jobs, investment and industrial diversification will benefit the area economy, provide needed opportunities, strengthen the real estate market and generate tax revenue to support local services; and

**WHEREAS**, the communities within Brazoria County must compete with other localities across the nation currently offering tax inducements to attract new plant and modernization projects; and

**WHEREAS**, any tax incentives offered in Brazoria County would reduce needed tax revenue unless strictly limited in application to those new and existing industries that bring new wealth to the community; and

**WHEREAS**, the abatement of property taxes, when offered to attract capital investment and primary jobs in industries which bring in money from outside a community instead of merely recirculating dollars within a community, has been shown to be an effective method of enhancing and diversifying an area of economy; and

**WHEREAS**, Texas law requires any eligible taxing jurisdiction to establish Guidelines and Criteria as to eligibility for tax abatement agreements prior to granting of any future tax abatement, and said Guidelines and Criteria to be unchanged for a two year period unless amended by a three-quarters vote;

**WHEREAS**, Texas law requires a public hearing regarding the proposed adoption, amendment, repeal, or reauthorization of tax abatement guidelines and criteria;

**WHEREAS**, a public hearing was held and these Guidelines and Criteria for Granting Tax Abatement in a Reinvestment Zone in Brazoria County was approved under Court Order \_\_\_\_\_ dated July 23, 2024.

Now, therefore, be it resolved that Brazoria County does hereby adopt these Guidelines and Criteria for granting tax abatement in reinvestment zones in Brazoria County.

**DEFINITIONS Section 1**

- (a) "Abatement" means the full or partial exemption from ad valorem taxes on certain property in a reinvestment zone in Brazoria County for economic development purposes.
- (b) "Abatement Period" means the period during which all or a portion of the value of real property or tangible personal property that is the subject of a tax abatement agreement is exempt from taxation.
- (c) "Abated Facility Site" (or "proposed abated facility site") means the tract(s) or area of land underlying the proposed improvements to be abated.

- (d) "Agreement" means a contractual agreement between a property owner and/or lessee and Brazoria County for the purpose of tax abatement.
- (e) "Base year value" means the assessed value of eligible property January 1 preceding the execution of the agreement plus the agreed upon value of eligible property improvements made after January 1 but before the execution of the agreement.
- (f) "Brazoria County Vendor and Services" means a company that employs Brazoria County residents and pays Brazoria County taxes.
- (g) "Deferred maintenance" means the improvements necessary for continued operations which do not improve productivity or alter the process technology.
- (h) "Distribution Center Facility" means buildings and structures, including machinery and equipment, used or to be used primarily to receive, store, service, or distribute goods or materials owned by the facility operator where seventy percent (70%) of the goods or services are distributed outside of Brazoria County.
- (i) "Economic Development" means participation in or support of an organized program or entity which for the purpose of its mission, engages in activities designed to encourage employment opportunities development/commercial and manufacturing business/industry to locate and/or expand in Brazoria County, thus expanding and diversifying the tax base as well as increasing the economic strength and stability of Brazoria County.
- (j) "Eligible jurisdiction" means Brazoria County and any municipality or other local taxing jurisdictions eligible to abate taxes according to Texas law, the majority of which is located in Brazoria County that levies ad valorem taxes upon and provides services to reinvestment zone in Brazoria County.
- (k) "Employee" for the purposes of the economic qualifications of Section 2(h)(2) of these Guidelines and Criteria shall include all persons directly employed by the owner of the planned improvement at the abated facility site/reinvestment zone together with any independent contractor or employee of independent contractors employed on a full-time (40 hours per week equivalent) basis at the facility site/reinvestment zone continuously for the duration of the abatement agreement.
- (l) "Existing facility" is the facility described in Section 2 (a) that will be expanded or modernized and which contains the proposed improvements to be abated. A manufacturing or processing unit or units of a larger plant complex that separately comprise a manufacturing or production sub-unit of the larger plant shall be considered the existing facility for purposes of the Section 2 (h) (2) employment retention requirement (that the planned improvements cause the retention or prevention of loss of employment of 10 employees or 50% of the employees of the existing facility, whichever is greater). For example, if an existing facility has 100 employees, an expansion or modernization of all or part of that facility must result in the retention of at least 50 employees employed at or in connection with the expanded or modernized "existing facility" in order for the facility improvements to qualify for abatement.
- (m) "Expansion" means the addition of buildings, structures, machinery or equipment for purposes of increasing production capacity.
- (n) "Facility" means property improvements completed or in the process of construction which together comprise an integral whole.

- (o) "Manufacturing Facility" means buildings and structures, including machinery and equipment, the primary purpose of which is or will be the manufacture of tangible goods or materials or the processing of such goods or materials by physical or chemical change.
- (p) "Modernization" means the replacement and upgrading of existing facilities which increases the productive input or output, updates the technology or substantially lowers the unit cost of the operation. Modernization may result from the construction, alteration or installation of buildings, structures, fixed machinery or equipment. It shall not be for the purpose of reconditioning, refurbishing, or repairing.
- (q) "New Facility" means a property previously undeveloped which is placed into service by means other than or in conjunction with expansion or modernization.
- (r) "Other Basic Industry" means buildings and structures including fixed machinery and equipment not elsewhere described, used or to be used for the production of products or services which serve a market primarily outside Brazoria County.
- (s) "Productive Life" means the number of years a property improvement is expected to be in service. After a cessation of production, the productive life of property improvements may be deemed to end, at County's election, on the date of cessation of production either upon (1) a determination by the County that it is unlikely the improvement(s) will be reactivated as an integral part of a producing facility, and/or (2) the expiration of eighteen (18) continuous or non-consecutive months of non-production in any twenty-four (24) month period following the date the property improvement(s) cease to be in active service as part of a facility operating in a producing capacity. Upon cessation of production and for calculation of the recapture amount of taxes, the "productive life" will be determined to begin on the effective date of the tax abatement as set forth in the Agreement.
- (t) "Qualified Vendors and Services" means those vendors and services that meet the company's individual stated requirements, which can include but are not limited to: safety, financial condition, environmental record, diverse suppliers, quality or ability to perform.
- (u) "Regional Entertainment Facility" means buildings and structures, including machinery and equipment, used or to be used to provide entertainment through the admission of the general public where seventy percent (70%) of users reside at least 50 miles from its location in Brazoria County.
- (v) "Research Facility" means buildings and structures, including machinery and equipment, used or to be used primarily for research or experimentation to improve or develop new tangible goods or materials or to improve or develop the production processes thereto.
- (w) "Regional Service Facility" means buildings and structures, including machinery and equipment, used or to be used to service goods where seventy percent (70%) of the goods being serviced originate outside of Brazoria County.
- (x) "Tangible personal property" means tangible personal property classified as such under state law, but excludes inventory and/or supplies, ineligible property as defined herein, and tangible personal property that was located in the reinvestment zone at any time before the period covered by the agreement with the County.

## **ABATEMENT AUTHORIZED Section 2**

- (a) **Authorized Facility.** A facility may be eligible for abatement if it is a: Manufacturing Facility, Research Facility, Distribution Center or Regional Service Facility, Regional Entertainment Facility, Other Basic Industry, or a facility that Commissioners Court determines would enhance job creation and the economic future of Brazoria County.
- (b) **Creation of New Value.** Abatement may only be granted for the additional value of eligible property improvements made subsequent to and specified in an abatement agreement between Brazoria County and the real property owner, tangible personal property owner, leasehold interest, and/or lessee, subject to such limitations as Brazoria County may require.
- (c) **New and Existing Facilities.** Abatement may be granted for new facilities and improvements to existing facilities for purposes of modernization or expansion.
- (d) **Eligible Property.** Abatement may be extended to the value of buildings, structures, tangible personal property as defined in the Tax Code including fixed machinery and equipment, site improvements and related fixed improvements necessary to the operation and administration of the facility.

**Tangible Personal Property:** Abatement may be granted with the owner of tangible personal property located on real property in a reinvestment zone to exempt from taxation (1) all or a portion of the value of the real property, (2) all or a portion of the value of the tangible personal property located on the real property, or (3) all or a portion of the value of both.

An abatement may be granted with the owner of tangible personal property or an improvement located on tax-exempt real property that is located in a designated reinvestment zone to exempt all or a portion of the value of the tangible personal property or improvement located on the real property.

- (e) **Ineligible Property.** The following type of property shall be fully taxable and ineligible for tax abatement: land, existing improvements, tangible personal property that the Brazoria County Appraisal District classifies as inventory or supplies, tools, furnishings, and other forms of movable personal property; vehicles, watercraft, aircraft, housing, convalescent homes, assisted living homes/centers, hotel accommodations, retail facilities, deferred maintenance investments, property to be rented or leased except as provided in Section 2(f), tangible personal property located in the reinvestment zone prior to the effective date of the tax abatement agreement, property already subject to real or personal property tax(es) moved from one location in Brazoria County to the reinvestment zone, real property with a productive life of less than 10 years, property owned or used by the State of Texas or its political subdivisions or by any organizations owned, operated or directed by a political subdivision of the State of Texas, or any other property for which abatement is not allowed by State law.
- (f) **Leased Facilities. Leasehold Interest:** Abatement may be granted with the owner of a leasehold interest in tax-exempt real property located in a reinvestment zone designated to exempt all or a portion of the value of the leasehold interest in the real property.

**Lessee Interest:** Abatement may be granted with a lessee of taxable real property located in a reinvestment zone to exempt from taxation (1) all or a portion of the value of the fixtures, improvements, or other real property owned by the lessee and located on the property that is subject to the lease, (2) all or a portion of the value of tangible personal property owned by the lessee and located on the real property that is the subject of the lease, or (3) all or a portion of the value of both the fixtures, improvements, or other real property and the tangible personal property defined herein.

Leasehold Interest/Lessee shall be required to submit with its application a copy of the executed lease agreement between lessor/lessee demonstrating a minimum lease term double the abatement term granted.

- (g) **Value and Term of Abatement.** Abatement shall be granted effective with the January 1 valuation date immediately following the date of the Commissioners Court Order granting the abatement and approving the abatement application. Commissioners Court shall determine the percent of value and the term of the abatement based upon the overall value of the project, the number and types of new jobs being created, the extent to which local labor or local subcontractors will be used in the construction phase, the types and values of public improvements to be made, and the extent to which Brazoria County vendors and service providers will be used during the operation of the project. Commissioners Court may vary the length and abatement percentage on a case by case basis upon consideration of the factors above and any other relevant factors. The term of abatement may be up to 10 years or one-half (1/2) of the productive life of the improvement, whichever is less. The “productive life” will be calculated from the effective date of the tax abatement and the date the equipment ceased to be in service. The abatement may be extended through an initial agreement and a subsequent agreement may be required to comply with state law regarding the term of the reinvestment zone. *See Exhibit “A” attached hereto.*

If it is determined that the abatement period would better benefit the County and the Applicant by deferring the commencement date beyond the January 1 following the Commissioners Court Order granting the abatement and approving the abatement application, the County may defer the commencement date of the abatement period to a future date certain. The deferral of the commencement date will not allow the duration of the abatement period to extend beyond ten (10) years. However, in no event shall the abatement begin later than the January 1 following the commencement of construction.

If a modernization project includes facility replacement, the abated value shall be the value of the new unit(s) less the value of the old unit(s).

New eligible properties must be in active service and operation as part of a facility operating in a producing capacity for a period equal to double the abatement period (*i.e.* seven year abatement, then in producing capacity for 14 years) in order to receive the full term of the abatement granted and not be subject to the term reduction and recapture/payment obligation provisions.

- (h) **Economic Qualification.** In order to qualify for tax abatement, the planned improvement:
- (1) must be reasonably expected to increase and must actually increase the value of the property in the amount of \$1 million or more;
  - (2) must create employment for at least 10 people on a full-time (40 hours per week equivalent) basis in Brazoria County for the duration of the abatement period at the abated facility site described in the tax abatement application; or alternatively, must retain and prevent the loss of employment of 10 employees or fifty percent (50%) of the existing number of employees, at the time of application, employed at or in connection with the existing facility containing the abated facility site described in the tax abatement application, whichever is greater, for the duration of the abatement period. The following is applicable to the employment retention/preventing loss of employment requirement:

a. “Existing facility” is the facility described in Section 2 (a) that will be expanded or modernized and which contains the proposed improvements to be abated. A manufacturing or processing unit or units of a larger plant complex that separately comprise a manufacturing or production sub-unit of the larger plant shall be considered the existing facility for purposes of the Section 2(h)(2) employment retention requirement (that the planned improvements cause the retention or prevention of loss of employment of 10 employees or 50% of the employees of the existing facility, whichever is greater). For example, if a large plant complex has a sub-unit that produces chlorine and 100 employees are employed at or in connection with that unit, an expansion or modernization of all or part of that facility must result in the retention of at least 50 employees employed at or in connection with the expanded or modernized “existing facility” in order for the facility improvements to qualify for abatement.

b. Employees of a larger plant unit transferred or assigned to and employed at or in connection with a new sub-unit containing the planned improvements, constructed on undeveloped land constituting the proposed abated facility site/reinvestment zone shall be considered “created” employment for purposes of this sub-section.

The proposed number of employees to be employed at the abated facility as stated in the abatement application for the property that is the subject of the tax abatement agreement (including the projected creation or retention of employment) must be maintained for the duration of the abatement period at the abated facility site. For purposes of this sub-section, in order for a planned improvement to be considered as preventing the loss of employment or retaining employment, the abated facility/project must be necessary in order to retain or keep employment at levels as indicated in the application and in order to retain the proposed number of employees at the abated facility as indicated in the application. The owner/Applicant seeking to qualify on the basis of retention or preventing loss of employment must provide a detailed statement as an attachment to its application affirmatively representing compliance with this sub-section and explaining the necessity of this project to prevent loss of employment. Any variance from the requirements of this sub-section is subject to approval of Commissioners Court in accordance with the variance section of these Guidelines & Criteria.

- (3) must be not expected to solely or primarily have the effect of transferring employment from one part of the county to another part of the county. A variance may be requested relative to this provision which approval shall be at the sole discretion of the County.
- (4) must be necessary because capacity cannot be provided efficiently utilizing existing improved property;

Additionally, the owner of the project:

- (5) must provide for and pay, at the time of filing an application for tax abatement, a non-refundable application fee of \$1,000. A part of the application fee will be dedicated by Brazoria County to economic development programs authorized by Local Government Code, Section 381.004. If Applicant requests the creation of a reinvestment zone, an additional non-refundable fee in the amount of \$200 is required to post notice in a newspaper as required by Chapter 312 of the Tax Code.

- (6) should give preference and priority to Brazoria County vendors and service providers, such as, manufacturers, suppliers, contractors, and labor, during all phases of the tax abatement. The owner of the project should give said preference and priority except where not reasonably possible to do so without risking substantial adverse impacts to the cost, quality or schedule for the applicable work or sacrifice in operating efficiency, environmental impact or safety. It is preferred that the owner seek qualified workers who are United States citizens and veterans and also legal residents prior to seeking workers from other countries. The owner must utilize local resources, such as local economic development corporations, chambers of commerce, and local advertising to attract qualified Brazoria County vendors and service providers.
- (7) The owner shall file an Economic Impact Plan as part of the application demonstrating the economic impact of the proposed project within Brazoria County. The Economic Impact Plan should include the number of jobs that will be created, planned use of Brazoria County vendors and service providers, planned partnerships or programs with local colleges, charitable organizations, and associations, and any other relevant information related to the economic impact of the project within Brazoria County. When feasible, the owner of the project should include the estimated costs associated or an analysis of the economic impact.

The owner shall provide evidence each year with its annual report, demonstrating that it is in compliance with its Economic Impact Plan.

- (8) will annually, for the term of the abatement, contribute .000207 of the value reported in "Part IV Section F" of the abatement application (estimated value of abated improvements at the conclusion of the abatement period). Air carriers receiving abatement will contribute an amount equal to .000207 of the estimated value of the personal property of the air carrier indicated in its Application. Each project will contribute no more than \$40,000 for projects less than \$500 million in capital investment, no more than \$65,000 for projects \$500 million to \$999 million in capital investment, and no more than \$80,000 for projects \$1 billion or more in capital investment. The minimum contribution shall not be less than \$3,500. This contribution shall be made annually to be used specifically to fund economic development in Brazoria County as authorized by Local Government Code, Section 381.004. The annual contribution shall be paid to Brazoria County through the County Auditor's Office on or before January 1 of each year of the tax abatement contract term.
- (9) must not file with the Brazoria County Appraisal District a valuation or taxpayer protest or notice of protest pursuant to the Texas Property Tax Code during the abatement period legally protesting the valuation of the abated improvements of a manufacturing facility pursuant to an appraisal method that produces a valuation of improvements based on each improvement's value as a separate item of personal property rather than the improvements' value as integral fixtures of a producing manufacturing facility. An owner's legal protest of the improvements' value pursuant to the Texas Property Tax Code must be based on and use accepted appraisal methods and techniques allowed by law (Texas Property Tax Code) and uniform standards of professional appraisal practice. The filing of a valuation protest or notice of protest contrary to this standard shall cause the tax abatement agreement to be subject to termination and recapture of all previously abated taxes.
- (10) must not be a defendant in any litigation by the County seeking recovery or recapture of previously abated taxes.

(11) will be wholly responsible for all County roads and right-of-way (including bridges, culverts, ditches, etc.) and damages caused thereto as a result of the construction, on-going maintenance, and operations of the Abated Facility Site as well as associated facilities to the Abated Facility Site, including but not limited to, the following:

- Cost to maintain the roads utilized for construction of the Abated Facility Site in an effort to keep the road safe for the traveling public will be tracked by the County and invoiced on a regular basis to the Abatee.
- Cost to reconstruct the roadway, if needed, will be actual cost to reconstruct the County roads and right-of way incurred by the County and invoiced to the Abatee. These costs will include all construction costs as well as all related professional services for the repair work.
- Abatee shall coordinate with the County Engineering Department regarding any and all use of County roads and right-of-way for construction, maintenance and operation of Abated Facility Site in accordance with County regulations in place for use of County facilities. In order to comply with County regulations, Abatee shall schedule and attend a pre-development meeting with the County Engineering Department prior to commencing construction. Abatee shall submit a road use plan to the County Engineering Department at least 3 days prior to attending the pre-development meeting. The road use plan should identify all County roads that may be affected by construction or use of the Abated Facility Site, as well as, the routes of any related pipelines.
- Abatee shall execute a Developer Agreement relating to the reconstruction and repair of affected County roads. Abatee shall not begin construction, of the Abated Facility until the Developer Agreement has been fully executed. Beginning construction prior to the execution of a Developer Agreement will result in the cancellation of the Abatement.

(12) will dedicate to the County, prior to the issuance of any permits, any right-of-way on Applicant's property considered necessary by the Brazoria County Engineer.

(13) will dedicate to the County or a drainage district with jurisdiction, any drainage easement(s) considered necessary by the Brazoria County Engineer or an engineer from the appropriate drainage district.

(i) Taxability. From the execution of the abatement contract to the end of the agreement period, taxes shall be payable as follows:

- (1) The value of ineligible property as provided in Section 2(e) shall be fully taxable;
- (2) the base year value of existing eligible property as determined each year shall be fully taxable; and
- (3) the additional value of new eligible property shall be taxable in the manner described in Section 2(g).



### APPLICATION Section 3

- (a) The Application for tax abatement may be obtained from the County Judge's Office or on the Brazoria County website at [www.brazoriacountytx.gov](http://www.brazoriacountytx.gov). Applicant may contact the Judge's Office at (979) 864-1200 or (281) 756-1200.
- (b) Any present or potential owner of taxable property in Brazoria County may request the creation of a reinvestment zone and tax abatement by filing a tax abatement application with Brazoria County. The application shall be filed by providing one (1) hardcopy to the County Judge's Office and an electronic copy to [BC312@brazoriacountytx.gov](mailto:BC312@brazoriacountytx.gov). The application provided will be furnished to each member of Commissioners Court and the Tax Abatement Review Committee (TARC). After filing the application, the Applicant shall provide an economic impact analysis report, in a format comparable to the Texas Governor's economic impact analysis report, to [BC312@brazoriacountytx.gov](mailto:BC312@brazoriacountytx.gov) prior to the TARC meeting on the Applicant's tax abatement application.
- (c) The application shall consist of a completed application form accompanied by: a general description of the proposed use and the general nature and extent of the modernization, expansion or new improvements which will be a part of the facility; a map and property description; CAD data or a shapefile with the boundaries of the reinvestment zone; and a time schedule for undertaking and completing the planned improvements. In the case of modernizing, a statement of the assessed value of the facility, separately stated for real and personal property, shall be given for the tax year immediately preceding the application. The application form shall require such financial and other information as Brazoria County deems appropriate for evaluating the financial capacity and other factors of the Applicant. Applicant should not submit confidential information as part of the application. If doing so cannot be avoided, a general description in non-confidential terms should be included on the application, along with a sealed document containing the confidential information as an attachment and clearly marked "CONFIDENTIAL".
- (d) Upon receipt of a completed application, the County shall notify in writing the presiding officer of the governing body of each eligible jurisdiction. Before acting upon the application, Brazoria County Commissioners Court shall hold a public hearing at which interested parties shall be entitled to speak and present written materials for or against the approval of the tax abatement. The public hearing shall also afford the Applicant and the designated representative of any eligible jurisdiction opportunity to show cause why the abatement should or should not be granted. Notice of the public hearing shall be clearly identified on a Brazoria County notice to be posted at least 30 days prior to the hearing.
- (e) After receipt of an application for creation of a reinvestment zone and application for abatement, the Tax Abatement Review Committee (TARC) shall prepare a feasibility study setting out the impact of the proposed reinvestment zone and tax abatement. The feasibility study shall include, but not be limited to, an estimate of the economic effect of the creation of the zone and the abatement of taxes and the benefit to the eligible jurisdiction and the property to be included in the zone. The economic impact analysis report provided by the Applicant shall be attached to the feasibility study and included as part of the feasibility study report.
- (f) If upon written request for a legal opinion or interpretation from the Commissioners Court or its members, the legal counsel for Brazoria County determines that the application does not appear to comply with the written language of the Guidelines and Criteria, a public hearing on said application if already set, shall be postponed for a period of at least thirty days from the scheduled date of public hearing to allow time for further review by the Commissioners Court or any duly appointed review

committee, or if an initial setting has not been made, the hearing on such application shall be set on the Commissioners Court agenda no sooner than sixty (60) days from the time the Court enters an order to set the public hearing date.

The Applicant shall file a supplement or addendum to its application to show cause why the application should be approved and shall present reasons at the public hearing on the same.

Provided that any final decision or interpretation as to the intent and meaning or policy of any provision or its written language; any final decision as to whether or not an application complies or does not comply with the guidelines and criteria; and any final decision as to whether to grant or deny tax abatement shall be made by the Commissioners Court at its sole discretion.

- (g) Brazoria County shall not establish a reinvestment zone for the purpose of Abatement with the County if it finds that the request for the abatement was filed after the commencement of construction, alteration, or installation of improvements related to a proposed modernization, expansion or new facility.
- (h) Brazoria County shall not establish a reinvestment zone for an Applicant that is not seeking an Abatement with the County under Chapter 312 of the Tax Code if construction, alteration, or installation of improvements related to a proposed modernization, expansion, or new facility has begun prior to the creation of the reinvestment zone. In order for an Applicant that is not seeking an Abatement with the County to request the creation of a reinvestment zone, the Applicant shall submit the request in writing to the County Judge with copy to [BC312@brazoriacountytx.gov](mailto:BC312@brazoriacountytx.gov). The request must include a request for the creation of a reinvestment zone by both the Applicant and the taxing entity that would be entering into an Abatement, a brief description of the project, a map or survey depicting the proposed reinvestment zone, and metes and bounds of the proposed reinvestment zone. In addition to the written request, Applicant shall submit a non-refundable reinvestment zone fee of \$200 to post notice in a newspaper as required by Chapter 312 of the Tax Code.
- (i) Variance. Requests for variance from the provisions of Subsections (a) (b) (e) (g), (h) (1), (h) (2) and/or (h) (3) of Section 2 may be made in written form to the County Judge with a copy forwarded to the TARC. Such requests shall include a complete description of the circumstances explaining why the Applicant should be granted a variance. Approval of a request requires a four-fifths (4/5) vote of the Commissioners Court.
- (j) Special Variance: Air Carriers. A special variance from all applicable provisions of these guidelines and criteria, with the exception of Section 2 (h) (5) and (h) (7) may be granted allowing abatement or partial abatement of ad valorem taxes on the personal property of a certificated or non-certificated air carrier that owns or leases taxable real property in Brazoria County provided that the personal property has a value of at least \$10,000,000. Approval of a request for this variance requires a three-fourth (3/4) vote of the Commissioners Court.

#### **APPROVAL Section 4**

- (a) Neither a reinvestment zone nor abatement agreement shall be authorized if it is determined that:
  - (1) there would be a substantial adverse effect on the provision of government service or tax base;
  - (2) the Applicant has insufficient financial capacity;

- (3) planned or potential use of the property would constitute hazard to public safety, health or morals; or
- (4) violation of other codes or laws.

## **AGREEMENT Section 5**

- (a) After approval, Brazoria County Commissioners Court shall formally pass a resolution and execute an agreement with the Applicant as required which shall include:
  - (1) estimated value to be abated and the base year value;
  - (2) percent of value to be abated each year as provided in Section 2(g);
  - (3) the commencement date and the termination date of abatement;
  - (4) the proposed use of the facility; nature of construction, time schedule, map, property description and improvement list as provided in Application, Sections II and III;
  - (5) contractual obligations in the event of default, violation of terms or conditions, delinquent taxes, recapture, administration and assignment as provided in Sections 2(a), 2(f), 2(g), 2(h) 6, 7, and 8;
  - (6) size of investment, the Economic Impact Plan, and average number of jobs involved for the period of abatement; and
  - (7) provision that Applicant shall annually furnish information necessary for Brazoria County's evaluation of Applicant's compliance with the terms and conditions of the tax abatement agreement and these guidelines and criteria (in the form of an annual report/statement of compliance), together with an additional provision that Brazoria County may, at its election, request and obtain information from Applicant as is necessary for the County's evaluation of Applicant's compliance with the terms and conditions of the tax abatement agreement and these guidelines and criteria. See Attachment A.
  - (8) provision that, upon expiration of the tax abatement agreement, Applicant shall begin annually reporting the status of the abated improvements regarding active service and operation as part of a facility operating in a producing capacity. Reporting will be for the same amount of years as the tax abatement period (*e.g.* seven year abatement, then follow-up reporting for seven more years). See Attachment B.
- (b) Such agreement shall be executed within sixty (60) days after the Applicant has forwarded all necessary information and documentation to Brazoria County.

## **RECAPTURE Section 6**

- (a) In the event the facility contemplated herein is completed and begins producing product or service, but the company fails to maintain the level of employment (including the projected creation or retention of employment) or fails to comply with its Economic Impact Plan as provided as part of the abatement application for the property that is the subject of the abatement agreement, the County may elect to:
  - (1) Declare a default and terminate the abatement agreement without recapturing prior years' abated taxes;
  - (2) Declare a default, terminate the agreement and order a recapture of all or part of the previous years'

abated taxes; or (3) Set specific terms and conditions for the continuation of the abatement exemption for the duration of the term of the agreement under its present terms or alter the amount of the abatement for the remaining term of the agreement. In making a determination under this Section, the County may consider evidence provided by the Owner regarding its failure to comply with its Economic Impact Plan.

- (b) Should Brazoria County determine that the company or individual is in default according to the terms and conditions of its agreement, Brazoria County shall notify the company or individual in writing at the address stated in the agreement and if such is not cured within sixty (60) days from the date of such notice ("Cure Period"), then the agreement may be terminated.
- (c) In the event that the company or individual (1) allows its ad valorem taxes owed the County to become delinquent and fails to timely and properly follow the legal procedures for their protest and/or contest, or (2) violates any of the terms and conditions of the abatement agreement and fails to cure during the Cure Period, the agreement then may be terminated and all taxes previously abated by virtue of the agreement will be recaptured and paid within sixty (60) days of the termination.
- (d) Failure to provide any requested statement or information pursuant to the provisions described in Section 5(a)(7) without just cause within sixty (60) days of the request for the information or the presentation of any false or misleading statement may, at the County's option, be construed as a default by the company or individual and cause for immediate termination of the tax abatement agreement and recapture of all previously abated taxes, if after written notice of default, the company or individual has not cured such default prior to the expiration of thirty (30) days from such written notice. The Cure Period provisions of sub-sections (b) and (c) above are not applicable to a default and termination under this paragraph.

#### **ADMINISTRATION Section 7**

- (a) The Chief Appraiser of the County shall annually determine an assessment of the real and personal property comprising the reinvestment zone. Each year, the company or individual receiving abatement shall furnish the assessor with such information as may be necessary for the abatement. Once value has been established, the Chief Appraiser shall notify the eligible jurisdictions which levy taxes on the amount of the assessment.
- (b) The agreement shall stipulate that TARC of Brazoria County will have access to the reinvestment zone during the term of the abatement to inspect the facility to determine if the terms and conditions of the agreement are being met. All inspections will be made only after the giving of twenty-four (24) hours prior notice and will only be conducted in such a manner as to not unreasonably interfere with the construction and/or operation of the facility. All inspections will be made with one or more representatives of the company or individual and in accordance with their safety standards.

- (c) Tax Abatement Review Committee:

The Commissioners Court shall appoint a standing Tax Abatement Review Committee (TARC) for purposes of (i) reviewing the tax abatement application and preparing the feasibility study report required by Section 3(d) of these guidelines; (ii) conducting annual inspections and/or evaluations of the abated facilities to insure compliance with the terms/conditions of the tax abatement agreement.

- (d) The Tax Abatement Review Committee shall be comprised of, but not limited to, a representative appointed by each Commissioners Court member. The County Auditor, County Treasurer, District Attorney representative, and County Tax Assessor Collector shall serve as ex-officio members of the

Committee to advise on abatement qualifications and procedures. The County Judge and the Commissioner of the Precinct in which a proposed abated facility will be located will serve on the Committee during the period when the Committee is preparing the feasibility study report and conducting the annual inspection and/or evaluation of the facility.

- (e) Upon commencement of construction, the owner of an abated facility must submit a written report/statement of compliance annually during the life of the abatement to the Brazoria County Commissioners Court and the Tax Abatement Review Committee clearly detailing the status of the facility and how it is complying with the abatement guidelines. The report shall be submitted to [BC312@brazoriacountytx.gov](mailto:BC312@brazoriacountytx.gov). The Committee shall annually evaluate each abated facility and report possible violations to the contract and agreement to the Brazoria County Commissioners Court. The form of annual report that shall be used by the owner is attached as Attachment A.
- (f) Upon expiration of the Tax Abatement term, the owner of the abated improvements must submit a written report/statement of compliance annually, beginning January 1 after the expiration of the tax abatement term, documenting that the abated improvements remain in active service and operation as part of a facility operating in a producing capacity for an additional period equal to the abatement period granted and completed (*e.g.* seven year abatement, then in producing capacity for an additional 7 years after expiration of the tax abatement agreement) in order to receive the full term of the abatement granted and not be subject to the term reduction and recapture/payment obligation provisions. The Report shall be submitted to [BC312@brazoriacountytx.gov](mailto:BC312@brazoriacountytx.gov). The Committee shall annually evaluate each abated facility and report possible violations to the contract and agreement to the Brazoria County Commissioners Court. A form of annual report that may be used by the owner is attached as Attachment B to these Guidelines & Criteria, and the owner's annual report shall, at a minimum, contain the information shown in the Attachment B form.
- (g) The County shall timely file with the Texas Department of Commerce and the Property Tax Division of the State Comptroller's office all information required by the Tax Code.

## **ASSIGNMENT AND MODIFICATION Section 8**

Abatement may be transferred and assigned by the holder to a new owner or lessee of the same facility upon the approval by resolution of Brazoria County subject to the financial capacity of the assignee and provided that all conditions and obligations in the abatement agreement are guaranteed by the execution of a new contractual agreement with Brazoria County. Assignee shall submit a tax abatement application in the same manner as required in Section 3, including financial information to the County Judge's office prior to consideration of assignment. Full assignment of the abatement requires approval by the TARC in addition to approval through public hearing in Commissioners Court. No assignment or transfer shall be approved if the new parties to the existing agreement, the new owner or new lessee are liable to Brazoria County or any eligible jurisdiction for delinquent taxes or other obligations. Approval shall not be unreasonably withheld.

Abatement may be modified or amended. A modification or amendment, except those that change the commencement date, correct clerical errors, or make administrative changes (including changes to the notification section or the company name) requires approval through public hearing in Commissioners Court.

## **PROVISIONS REGARDING CITY-INITIATED ABATEMENTS Section 9**

- (a) This section is applicable to tax abatement applications for property located in a reinvestment zone designated by a city and applications by Applicants who have previously entered into a tax abatement agreement with a city regarding that property.

- (b) All provisions of these Guidelines & Criteria are applicable to city-initiated reinvestment zones and abated areas within a city's territorial limits unless otherwise stated herein or provided by law.
- (c) An Applicant shall file a tax abatement application on the County's application form together with all attachments and statements described in the application instructions and in subsection (d) herein below.
- (d) Upon receipt of a tax abatement application applicable to property within a city-designated reinvestment zone subject to a city's tax abatement agreement, the application shall be reviewed for approval as to (a) correct application form, (b) represented compliance with economic value estimates and employment criteria of Section 2(h) of the Guidelines & Criteria, (c) legal description requirements, (d) attachment of a correct copy of the city's ordinance designating the area as a reinvestment zone and granting abatement and (e) attachment of a correct copy of the fully executed tax abatement agreement between the city and the Applicant.
- (e) After review (and subject to approval of the matters in (d) above) and meeting of the TARC, the application will be placed on the next Commissioners Court meeting for consideration. If there are any compliance problems with the application (including any problems to be resolved or amendments to the application to be made), the County Judge and Commissioners shall be advised of these compliance problems/matters to be resolved in a memo from the Civil Division-District Attorney's Office. No Application shall be placed on the Agenda if the application fails to attach both the ordinance designating reinvestment zone and the copy of the fully executed tax abatement agreement between the city and the Applicant, or which is deficient as to application form or legal description. In such case the Applicant shall be informed of the necessity of attaching those documents or making necessary corrections, and there will be no further processing of the application until the same are received.
- (f) The notice provisions of Section 3(d) are not applicable to an application under this section.
- (g) The percentage of property value abated and the term of abatement shall be the same as that stated in the city's tax abatement agreement unless otherwise specifically ordered in the Commissioners Court order granting abatement.

#### **SUNSET PROVISION Section 10**

- (a) These Guidelines and Criteria are effective upon the date of their adoption and will remain in force for two years, at which time all reinvestment zones and tax abatement contracts created pursuant to its provisions will be reviewed by Brazoria County to determine whether the goals have been achieved. Based on that review, the Guidelines and Criteria will be modified, renewed or eliminated, provided that such actions shall not affect existing contracts or applications for tax abatement filed prior to the expiration of said Guidelines and Criteria. Applications for abatement filed prior to the expiration of the Guidelines and Criteria shall be governed by the provisions of these Guidelines and Criteria regardless of any subsequent modification or amendment.
- (b) This policy is mutually exclusive of existing Industrial District Contracts and owners of real property in areas deserving of special attention as agreed by the eligible jurisdictions.
- (c) These guidelines and policies for Tax Abatement shall be effective July 23, 2024, and shall remain in force until July 23, 2026, unless amended or superseded, modified, renewed, or eliminated by Commissioners Court prior to that date.

# ATTACHMENT A

(TO THE BRAZORIA COUNTY GUIDELINES & CRITERIA FOR GRANTING TAX  
ABATEMENT)

*(This form is located at [www.brazoriacountytx.gov](http://www.brazoriacountytx.gov) )*

ANNUAL REPORT FORM

**ANNUAL REPORT**  
PURSUANT TO SECTION 5(a)(7) AND 7(e) OF  
THE BRAZORIA COUNTY GUIDELINES &  
CRITERIA ON TAX ABATEMENT

RE: TAX ABATEMENT AGREEMENT

\_\_\_\_\_ (Company/Owner Name)

REINVESTMENT ZONE (RZ) NO. \_\_\_\_\_ (Number of RZ, if applicable)

1. Commencement and/or completion date of the contemplated improvements described in the tax abatement agreement

Date of commencement of construction: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of completion all contemplated improvements: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Number of permanent employees, contract employees and temporary contract employees currently employed by you at the tax abated facility location or construction site as of the date of this Report. (See definitions below).

Permanent Employees: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Permanent Contract Employees \_\_\_\_\_  
(\* List contract employees employed on a full-time, 40 hours per week equivalency basis and who are expected to be employed on a full-time basis for the duration of the abatement period. Do not include temporary contract employees.)

\*\*Temporary Contract Employees \_\_\_\_\_  
(\*\*List temporary contract employees who are employed for a temporary period ending prior to expiration of the tax abatement term)

3. Status of construction of the contemplated improvements, percentage of construction completed and Owner's estimate of taxable value of constructed improvements on the date of the Report.

Percentage of construction completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated value of Improvements: \_\_\_\_\_  
As of \_\_\_\_\_



4. Status of production of the completed facility and the productive service capacity of the improvements. *(only applicable to a completed facility that has previously commenced production)*

Is the abated facility currently producing the product or similar product described in the tax abatement agreement?

**Check One**  
( ) Yes or ( ) No

If the answer to the above question is "No", please state the date or time period when production ceased and attach a narrative explanation of the reason for cessation of production as Attachment B.

If production at this abated facility is shut down, please state the expected date or time period, if any, at which/during which you expect the facility to resume production operations. If you do not expect to resume production at this abated facility, please state "plant closed" in the blank space.

State your estimate of the expected productive life of the abated facility and its improvements as measured from the beginning date of production until the expected permanent cessation of production (*or in other words*, the total number of years, if any, that you expect the abated facility improvements to be in service as part of the operations of a producing facility, including in your total any previous years of production prior to the date of this report.)

5. Include a list of Brazoria County vendors and services and evidence of compliance with the Economic Impact Plan. (attach the same as Attachment A to this Report)

Is the list of Brazoria County vendors and services attached?

**Check One**  
( ) Yes or ( ) No

Is evidence showing compliance with the Economic Impact Plan attached?

( ) Yes or ( ) No

6. Provide name, title, address, and email address of company contact for notice purposes.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

To the best of my knowledge, the above information and estimates are true and correct.

Owner: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title/Position \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# ATTACHMENT B

(TO THE BRAZORIA COUNTY GUIDELINES & CRITERIA FOR GRANTING TAX  
ABATEMENT)

*(This form is located at [www.brazoriacountytx.gov](http://www.brazoriacountytx.gov))*

REPORT FORM  
After the initial term of the  
Tax Abatement Agreement

**PRODUCTIVE LIFE REPORT**  
**TAX ABATEMENT TERM COMPLETED**  
PURSUANT TO SECTION 5(a)(8) AND 7(f) OF  
THE BRAZORIA COUNTY GUIDELINES &  
CRITERIA ON TAX ABATEMENT

RE: TAX ABATEMENT AGREEMENT

\_\_\_\_\_ (Company/Owner Name)

REINVESTMENT ZONE (RZ) NO. \_\_\_\_\_ (Number of RZ, if applicable)

Effective Date of Tax Abatement: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Status of production of the completed facility and the productive service capacity of the improvements.

Is the abated facility currently producing the product  
or similar product described in the tax abatement agreement?

**Check One**  
( ) Yes or ( ) No

If the answer to the above question is "No",  
please state the date or time period when production ceased  
and attach a narrative explanation of the reason for cessation  
of production as Attachment A.

\_\_\_\_\_

If production at this abated facility is  
shut down, please state the expected  
date or time period, if any, at which/during which  
you expect the facility to resume production operations.  
If you do not expect to resume production at this  
abated facility, please state "plant closed" in  
the blank space.

\_\_\_\_\_

State your estimate of the expected  
productive life of the abated facility and its improvements as  
measured from the beginning date of production until the expected  
permanent cessation of production (*or in other words*, the total number  
of years, if any, that you expect the abated facility improvements to be  
in service as part of the operations of a producing facility, including  
in your total any previous years of production prior to the date of this report.)

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Provide name, title, address, and email address of company contact for notice purposes.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

To the best of my knowledge, the above information and estimates are true and correct.

Owner: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title/Position \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_