

Data Center Regulations: Community Meeting.

On June 30th the County held a community meeting at the County Office Building located on 5th Street. The County asked for feedback about the proposed overlay district and the proposed regulations for data centers. Below is a summary of the comments received on each topic.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK ON ZONING OVERLAY DISTRICT

No bigger than 40K sf. (twice)

Why doesn't Board of Supervisors decide not to permit data centers?

Where are the publicly available figures that are being used to make the statement PTO-

If the County can ban data centers, we should ban them and find other sources of revenue. Data centers are a lazy option.

Pantops is too residential.

Total disregard of the climate crisis.

Who is paying for data centers.

Why are we rushing into this without a financial plan? Who is researching that.

Why Albemarle when Northern VA already has the highest concentration of data centers in the U.S.?

How will Albemarle meet climate goals if we add data centers?

Do not allow data centers in the County.

Business if property tax is the only source of revenue from data centers what other tax options exist for the County?

Limits on max sound level with backup generators running.

Talked about cost: how about benefits.

What are the revenue projections for data centers?

500,000 sq. ft is too big. (twice)

We want to preserve our county and address the climate issue.

Water use disclosures B4 permit – Public disclos. of ongoing water use.

How does having data centers benefit residents quality of life?

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK ON PROPOSED REGULATIONS

GENERAL

What are the revenue projections for data centers?

SETBACKS

- No Comments

BUILDING DESIGN

Size restrictions – Smaller centers

Keep 40,000 sq. foot regulation not more.

Put underground like Europe.

Allow flexibility if the building is fully screened from adjacent parcels and roads.

GENERATORS

Air emissions. Can you set air emission levels at whatever you want? Could they be set low enough to require solar & battery gen instead of diesel?

Details of EPA Tier 4.

My concern is air pollution esp. if running constantly – data ctrs should use battery back up.

WATER

Although it's public water and sewer, our reservoirs are affected by the ground table and the wells will be affected. What happened in a drought? County pay for affected wells?

Let's wait til better technology exists that uses less water + less power. (Twice)

How will a drought affect it? This is way more than Albemarle needs on top of run away building. How to determine who will hear it what are permitted decibels?

LANDSCAPING/SCREENING

Green walls Native Plants

NOISE

Set a maximum decibel level allowed w/in 200 feet of property line.

Have we considered noise effect on local wildlife?

PUBLIC COMMENT RECEIVED ON ENGAGE ALBEMARLE

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

I have no interest of a data center in Albemarle County. I can see no benefit. There was mention of traffic not being increased as a result of a data center since it doesn't require a lot of employees. While traffic is an annoyance, ultimately Albemarle county should be looking to bring in companies that offer good jobs for its constituents. It should not bring in data centers that require an exorbitant amount of water and electricity, not to mention space/land to provide 10 people job. I hope this is something the County shuts down its thoughts on to protect the utilities and beauty of our county.

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

An absolutely horrible idea to allow data centers in our country. Besides taking up farmland, the demands on our water supply and electric grid are staggering, not to mention the noise and declining real estate values wherever they are zoned. There is zero benefit to allowing those behemoths into our county, let them go elsewhere. Please don't even toy with this crazy idea.

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

I do not support or want a data center in Crozet.

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

Section B does not include other/newer technology for cooling such as air. Henrico County's recent adopted data center ordinance includes language to allow for new technology and states "unless another cooling system is approved". Adding similar language would allow flexibility in the future for data centers that may not have sufficient water available for cooling, but can use the latest technology of air and may not need public water and sewer. Section E: why not echo the fencing and landscaping requirements for solar facilities? Also including similar language as the solar ordinance to allow the Agent to approve landscaping equal to or more than standards would allow flexibility. Section F (1): This language is very very limiting "any building façade visible from public streets or property abutting the data center". A data center may be adjacent to a large parcel which could have views into the site based on the topography. So even if the data center is a mile away, but still visible, the language proposed would require

breaks in massing even if at that distance it may not be discernable. The same is true for public roads, a public road could be miles away, but still see the buildings of the data center. These changes to the façade increase the costs of the building and may not make a difference in how it is viewed from adjacent properties or public roads. Section G: The way that this section reads is that even construction noise is limited to these decibels. If that is the intent, that could be limiting for construction of the facilities. Recommend a section specific to construction. Section I: This language is vague and could cause issues at review. Would "power supplied by Dominion" be sufficient? Is a plan showing if power needs to be extended to the site how that would be accomplished be required at SP? Is a letter from Dominion or other power company stating they will have capacity required at the SP?

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

This is not in accordance with the county's climate action plan.

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

As someone who has written code that has been deployed at these large data centers, I have a few thoughts on how the county can best protect its resident and natural resources. 1. The ordinance should include hard limits on how many gallons of water these data centers use from the local water supply. While I support the need for the center to use a closed loop water management strategy, Albemarle needs to ensure that these data centers do not impact local water table levels etc. (See what has happened in Memphis TN in regards to data centers with out of control water usage. As someone who uses well water, I do not want these data centers to impact local water supply or quality. 2. I support Section J, However this section should be expanded, so that there should be NO special exemption for the totality of sections A and B. 3. Measure E should be expanded to include additional square footage of natural native landscaping with a minimum requirement of 50% of the surrounding the data center with pollinator grasslands or other approved native habitat. For example a 100,000 sqft data center will need at minimum an additional 50,000 sqft land area for a maintained area of native plants and trees. This will help ensure noise levels are minimized for the surrounding area as well as ensure that our native landscape is preserved. Additionally, there is no special exemptions allowed to waive or modify this requirement. 4. This ordinance should include an additional section in regards to special weather events or natural disasters in the area, such that if the data center is damaged via flood, wind event, tornado, hurricane, fire, etc that the company that owns the data center is fiscally responsible for clean up in accordance to local, state and federal laws. And if they do

not properly clean up then Albemarle will assume ownership of the data center and all its assets; the company is fined the amount of the total cost of cleanup; and the offending company is no longer allowed to build any other data center in the county, this is to ensure that there is adequate clean up if an adverse event impacts the data centers hardware/batteries/ power supply so that they do not contaminate our beautiful county's soil or water. Additionally, there is no special exemptions allowed to waive or modify this requirement. As the climate continues to change, and adverse weather events become more common, the county needs to protect its residents and local small businesses to ensure that large corporations do not contaminate our land due to poor planning and leave every-day taxpayers footing the bill. 5. The ordinance should require additional limits on power use from the data center such that the energy usage from the data-center does not adversely impact our local power grid. Data centers use massive amounts of power which can impact local residents' appliances, and sudden changes in energy uses can cause blackouts and other issues. The ordinance should require a percentage of power to be used from renewable sources such as solar panels, and should have contingency plans in place should there be a sudden change in power demand from these data centers. In total, residents should not have to worry about blackouts or brownouts due to poorly managed data centers. Additionally, there is no special exemptions allowed to waive or modify this requirement.

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

500,000 is about 9 football fields of land use. Just for one data center. I can't imagine the power needed to power that many computers. Not only that, but the noise regulations are too lax. The generator maintenance and testing happen regularly, yet there are exceptions made for these events. Consistent noise disrupts wildlife. 9 football fields of uninhabitable space for wildlife, not to mention the sound that will permeate around the center. No decor can mask how ugly and disruptive a data center is

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

Please draft so that data centers are forbidden. Anyone who's seen what they've done to Loudoun county landscape should never want them in Alb. County. Minimal jobs, huge eyesore.

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

Crozet has limited space already for new development and has a finite water supply. Greenwood, the Albemarle County portion of the 151 corridor, Earlysville, and North Garden all have open spaces. Consider those areas instead.

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

Thank you for permitting feedback. In my view, "200 feet from all lot lines and 500 feet from the Rural Areas zoning district" is insufficient--the distances should be several times that.

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

It would be helpful to see a map of what parts of the county are zoned industrial. I could not easily find that. At a high level, I am opposed to the county have ANY data centers. They are a tremendous drain on resources and are not good neighbors, even with restrictions. Let's instead attract businesses that directly benefit the residents of our county and tread much more lightly on the environment...once lost, very hard to get it back.

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

Keep the rules as permissive as possible. Data centers can be a HUGE tax benefit to the County. We are well positioned with ample water available. Having a few data centers can diversify the tax base without any real negative effects.

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

While I appreciate that there is a perspective that values increased and diversified tax revenue, I think that Albemarle County is losing its way vying to be, effectively, another DC suburb. The charm and uniqueness of Albemarle County is nearing extinction by the excessive growth. To me, this growth begets several other related effects (also being championed by the Board of Supervisors) such as traffic cameras. Data centers are monstrosities. Gainesville, VA, for example, started with "a few designated" locations and soon that plan was amended and these megalith structures along with the associated massive power structures nearby destroy the once pleasant natural spaces. I think that the constant push for a larger tax basis clouds the judgement of decision makers. Growing too fast and taking on projects and programs with hopes of something in the future paying for it has put us in these situations (Rivanna Futures for example). I

also think that the draw in the water supply is ill advised. I lived in Colorado for several years and saw how growth put massive strains on the environment and the subsequent era over water rights. After seeing the issue with the reservoir and Crozet recently, I further question the data centers. As the provision in the draft current states, the initial somewhat tucked away spots in the overlays assuredly will be added to. I think that Albemarle would do well to pump the brakes on the development and the addition of program after program and let the dust settle - observe the impacts of the already rampant development and constant tax increases and get things back under properly scoped management for a semi rural and very special community. We are in a fast track to become just another suburb of DC which would be a terrible loss.

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

I am 100% against any data centers in Albermarle County. I am well aware of the extremely negative effects on the environment. The data centers are placed in lower income places across the country. Only those that are extremely wealthy receive huge monetary profits from the data centers. These data centers do absolutely nothing for the majority of people who live where these are built. The only thing I would get from a data center in the county are extremely higher electric costs, extreme damage to the environment and noise pollution.

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

Do not allow bigger data centers. They are bad for the environment in many ways. They are also opposed to Albemarle's Climate Action Plan.

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

I am NOT in favor of allowing the development of data centers in Albemarle County. I am originally from NoVA and we have seen the damaging effects of these data centers in our communities. Not only are they environmentally unfriendly eyesores, but they lower property values, encroach on public lands, and may have detrimental impacts on the health of those who live in close proximity. There is some evidence to suggest that these centers can lead to air and water pollution, in addition to the introduction of hazardous materials into our communities. Do NOT allow these blights into our beautiful Albemarle County!

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

I have run a business for 25 years in Albemarle County. Top issues I have are lack of reliable infrastructure like electricity. AEP has done little to no maintenance and I've been told they are 5-7 years out from addressing regular power outages. But Albemarle is fine with adding more, lots more to the already lacking power grid problem. Second water. We regularly experience droughts and water issues especially us on wells. Where is all the water coming from? What are you doing to protect the residents from their wells going dry from a data center pulling from our drinking water? What about the air quality @ these centers? So it's lovely you are going to try to keep the noise down and plant things to cover up the environmental impact these facilities do, but what are you doing to make sure all of us who live here have safe, reliable water, clean air and reliable, affordable electricity.

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

We must NOT allow data centers over 40,000 sq feet in Albemarle County. The toll on the environment is too great. Mining of rare earth minerals, toxic materials, pollution. NO!!!

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

Please do not approve of bringing any more data centers to Albemarle County. Thank you.

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

Although I live in Albemarle County, I've worked for Prince William County Fire & Rescue for nearly twenty years. Data centers were also seen in Prince William County as a viable means of generating revenues with low demands on services. These structures, however, have become a visual blight on areas of the county where they've been permitted to go up. Even such efforts as your ordinance includes, to break up the visual features, do little to improve the grotesque appearance of airplane-hanger sized buildings in what used to be relatively rural land. The Emerson/Rivanna Futures proposed area, while accessed off 29, backs on to numerous rural properties with relatively affordable housing prices, a boon for county residents. These will be significantly and adversely affected by the proximity of these structures. I beg you to reconsider the effects of inviting such gross changes to the county from the proliferation of large-footprint data centers anywhere but in established industrial zones. Even there,

maintaining stricter limits on the size of the centers will assure that we are allowing businesses to house their own infrastructure without contributing to the kind of monolithic, dystopian visual sprawl that has become common in other counties.

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

Camp Holiday Trails is a year-round nonprofit camp for children and teens with medical needs and their siblings. We focus on medical health, mental wellness and the therapeutic benefits of nature. It is not ideal for a data center to be in proximity to our Camp and deter from the respite we provide our campers and families

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

This Ordinance needs to include a section governing the electricity usage of the facility. This section needs to include language that prohibits the data center from negotiating energy rates from public utilities. The data center electricity usage must be charged with pricing according to their energy usage and pay at least as much (if not more) as county residents pay for their energy usage. This section must be included to ensure that the energy usage from these facilities do not increase county residents utility costs, and if costs do increase the data center is prohibited from negotiating down their utility bills. Tax payers should not subsidize these data centers electricity usage.

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

This ordinance should require annual air and soil testing of the ground and air and must maintain limits within the local, state, and federal limits. This is to ensure that the data center is not contaminating our environment. If the soil and air testing reveals contaminants above the applicable standards, the data center is responsible for all clean up and must investigate the cause of the pollution. This is to ensure that the data center does not pollute our environment and force taxpayers to foot the bill. There should also be enforceable fines and other measures intended to ensure that these data center operators are not cutting costs and creating future problems for Albemarle county.

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

My main concern, aside from the immense amount of water use and refrigerant needed for HVAC and cooling systems, is the destruction of the land of this area. Crozet in

particular is experiencing overcrowding and constant destruction of land for more housing. The county has yet to build a new elementary school, resulting in the two elementary schools to be overcrowded as well—with Brownsville being out of land and space to expand. The little land that is left in this area is being used for more poorly built houses that people stay in for a year or two before selling for outrageous prices. This community of families and people who stay and build social community is constantly dwindling as it's difficult to buy land or a house here. I worry that continued use of the land will further destroy small town community from a social stand point as well as the land. Thank you!

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

I don't believe this to be a good thing for our County. We already have, or so we're told, problems with supplying power, water and sewage services. These data centers require super large quantities of power for sure, and I'm speculating that water and sewage services will be stressed too. I don't believe that this is the type of growth that we want in our communities. Please don't succumb to \$\$s.

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

As a resident of Albemarle County, I am writing to express my opposition to any approval of special use permitting of Data Centers in Albemarle County. While it is true that there must be an ordinance regulating Data Centers, that ordinance must require any Data Center to operate in an environmentally responsible manner. The energy requirements of Data Centers are in direct contradiction of the stated energy goals of Albemarle County and the State of Virginia. The noise created by Data Centers during power outages is debilitating to the natural environment and humans. The water demands of Data Centers need to be clearly stated and Municipal Water authorities need to inform all citizens of Albemarle County of any extra expenses which Data Centers will cause. We as citizens of Albemarle County have a sacred obligation to preserve the environment for future generations. Global warming is a proven fact. This current draft of regulations Data Centers is inadequate in addressing environmental issues, and therefore, is environmentally destructive. In addition: 1. No noise from a Data Center should be audible in any residence or business containing offices or outdoor facilities such as restaurants. 2. No Data Center should be allowed in a rural area. 3. No Data Center should be allowed to be sold for 10 years after its completion 4. All Data Centers must be required to use poured concrete for all floors and walls and insulated to the highest possible level. 5. No Data Center should exceed 40,000 square feet. Exceptions for larger Data Centers should not be permitted under any

circumstances. 6. Data Centers should be required to pay all costs associated with their power line and data line construction. 7. All Data Centers must be powered by renewal energy only. 8. Albemarle County needs to protect the environment, not degrade it. It must be proven to the taxpayers of Albemarle County that the tax revenue from Data Centers far exceeds the costs to Albemarle County residents in the costs of increased water demands, infrastructure, sound and pollution, increases in power bills to all businesses and taxpayers, and the consequences of environmental degradation caused by higher utility towers which will stain and ruin the views of many residents throughout the county.

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

Albemarle County wastes its land assets. The proposed setback regime in the proposed Data Center ordinance is absolutely STUPID:

<https://catyli.st/687eff06f0a8bc717550224f>. The setback from a district boundary should be no more than 20' to 50'. Stop wasting land resources!!!!!!! There should not need to be a Data Center overlay. The larger question is that Data Centers are energy and natural resource, water, use intense. All costs and impacts from permitted Data Center development should be born by the developer and primary operator. Just like the DOD invasion, and UVA which pay no real estate tax and produce heavy resource and infrastructure impacts; those cost that are currently pushed off on local residents should be paid by the primary users through impact fees or a special use consumption tax to cover those impact costs for the duration of the use/consumption. And in the case of water, the developer should be required to pay for and restore that capacity to the County that is uses.

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

Data centers should not be allowed in the county at all. They are--or at least should be--self-evidentially a terrible idea. They provide no benefit to residents while consuming a huge amount of natural resources. Albemarle is not a poor county, hurting for money. There is no need to go chasing tax dollars from data centers. It's just such an absurd idea to even consider allowing data centers here that I don't even know where to start. Terrible terrible idea, and near as I can tell, 99.9% of the public comments are totally against it. Maybe listen to the public (i.e., voters) on this one?

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

I vehemently oppose the development of data centers anywhere within Albemarle County. These facilities monopolize scarce resources such as energy and water, They disturb natural areas with constant noise, as has been widely reported. No. No. No.

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

Every County in Virginia needs to say "no" to data centers until the Commonwealth is ready to say "yes" to continued and expanded use of fossil fuels (natural gas) and nuclear energy for power generation. Virginia has shouldered an overwhelming share of the burden of these energy hogs. All Virginians are feeling the pain of rising energy costs resulting from the need for increased capacity. The potential for rolling brownouts is even more concerning as new capacity can't possibly come on line in time to feed the hungry beasts. Even if a company pays for substation and distribution infrastructure, that does nothing to relieve the energy burden on Virginians and just adds to the eyesore. There is no reason to expand the by right development of Data Centers. Most residents of Loudoun, Prince William and other Counties that have fallen for the easy money are not happy with the tradeoffs. Just 200 feet (less than a football field) from homes? The noise and visual impacts are unreasonable. The noise issue is not the same as a few hours of music and then listen to the crickets and tree frogs. The noise generated by cooling units is unceasing. Please don't join the other lemmings and expand by right opportunities for data centers in Albemarle. Virginians have been suckers long enough: strip mined without remediation or reinvestment; 25% of landfill material from out of state; 35% of the world's hyperscale data centers...enough is enough. Most importantly, do NOT offer property tax incentives to lure companies here. If you sell us out, at least get paid. Finally, expect much more comment once people can see the actual overlay district. The presentation is not binding; what surprises are in store?

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

I am against the building of data centers in Albemarle County.

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

Data Centers would be a complete blight on the landscape here. They use huge amounts of electricity. They create a ton of noise pollution, even during normal operations. Storage of diesel fuel for the generators is a concern. They will add to our

already egregious light pollution, which is honestly embarrassing for our population density. It's not like they will be creating thousands of low impact, highly desirable jobs vs their huge environmental impact. Data centers are minimally staffed. -- "What is the economic benefit of allowing data centers in Albemarle County?" 'If developed, data centers could add significantly to the County's commercial tax base. A stronger commercial tax base can help fund public services and infrastructure while potentially reducing the County's reliance on residential property taxes.' Can you stop saying stuff like this? It's honestly rage inducing. You have *ZERO* credibility for rolling back taxes here, EVER. A fiscal sleight of hand that even a 3rd grader could see, is insulting. In closing, we don't need to aspire to be more like dystopian Northern Virginia. Thanks for your time.

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

As a longtime resident of Albemarle County, I am firmly opposed to allowing these dreadful data centers to be located here, or anywhere near here. I agree with John Smith that they would blight our landscape and our environment. And what a splendid landscape, what a healthy environment we have. Why are we even considering such a thing as this? Is it because of fear? The people behind this data center boom want you to be afraid—afraid that you will miss out on a golden revenue opportunity to offset the coercive cuts to Federal programs that have helped sustain communities like ours. These people couldn't care less about us and our community. Just look at what they're doing in places like Newton County, Georgia. And suburban Memphis, Tennessee. And the northern Virginia counties around Washington, D.C. (I refer you to the highly informative comment posted by Erin R, which spells this out). In short, inform yourself of the irreversible damage posed by these data centers and ask yourself, who really benefits? You will find out that it will certainly not be Albemarle County. The billionaires in the woodpile, the ones pushing this scheme, the ones behind privatizing everything worthwhile in the precarious commonwealth, want you think that you'll be better off, but the numbers, as always, only really favor them. Don't fall for it. Make our ordinances bulletproof. Exploitation proof. Protect us from these greedy cyber slickers looking to plunder our shared, irreplaceable environment for yet more excess profits for themselves.

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

I also put my feedback in the draft ordinance post's comments section, but it stripped all line breaks out so I'm hoping this one works better. Please be sure to consider the feedback submitted from everyone not only through this form, but also in the draft ordinance post's comments section (<https://engage.albemarle.org/data-center->

[regulations/news_feed/read-the-draft-ordinance](#)) and on the county's post on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/19f9yYYA4f/>). ----- Data centers require tremendous amounts of power. According to MIT, as of 2022, the cloud had a greater carbon footprint than the airline industry, with individual data centers consuming the equivalent electricity of 50,000 homes. Since then, data centers have continued to expand in number, size, energy needs, and environmental impact, particularly to support the growth of AI, yet the industry has not broadly adopted new technologies and approaches to mitigate this. The hunger for energy has exploded such that “Growth in data center power demand in Virginia is increasing at a rate far exceeding Dominion Energy’s capacity to provide it,” according to a Northern Virginia case study from LandApp.com, a pro-data center company. This drives an increasing reliance on fossil fuels, perhaps even more so now that the federal government is slashing incentives for renewable energy development. Indeed, Dominion has used data centers to justify its increased reliance on methane gas and pipelines. As such, allowing data centers in Albemarle County in the near future is contrary to the county’s Climate Action Plan (<https://www.albemarle.org/home/showpublisheddocument/5432/637382865947300000>). The Board of Supervisors adopted the Climate Action Plan plan just five years ago with many of the same members who sit on the Board today. According to the document, “This is the community’s plan. The Albemarle County Climate Action Plan reflects the work of scores of community members attending outreach events, committing time to serving on sector work groups, and generating hundreds of comments about opportunities, ideas, and challenges that the plan must address.” It is a betrayal of our community and their dedication and work over years to create this plan to set it aside because the potential tax revenue is too enticing. How would allowing data centers, of up to half a million square feet developed by right and even larger by special permit, impact the county’s goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions 45% by 2030 (from 2008 levels) and achieving net zero emissions by 2050? The Climate Action Plan says, “We cannot achieve these goals without the partnership of our residents, business community, and institutional partners.” By nature, data centers today are not in a position to be these kinds of partners. Admittedly, there are incredible developments happening to move them in that direction, so Albemarle County need not prohibit data centers forever, but should periodically revisit the ability of data centers to exist in harmony with our goals and evolve our policies as appropriate. The Climate Action Plan is about more than greenhouse gas emissions, however. It also clearly asserts the county’s commitment to a climate protection program that will, in part: * Benefit the health of all residents; * Protect the local natural environment; * Stimulate the creation of green jobs to support a thriving local economy; Data centers are contrary to these goals, as well. The noise generated by data centers and its impact on the health of residents has been documented in studies and anecdotally in many news stories. There are several types of noise, such as the constant hum of industrial-scale cooling fans and

the rumble of backup diesel generators, that can ruin the peace of neighbors' homes, even at a distance. One of the reasons for this is that the volume is often quiet enough that it does not meet the noise ordinance threshold, yet the pitch is low and able to travel through walls, interfering with sleep, work, and leisure activities. According to the Data Centers in Virginia 2024 Report to the Governor and the General Assembly of Virginia (<https://jlarc.virginia.gov/pdfs/reports/Rpt598-2.pdf>), "Some residents described physical symptoms such as migraines from the facilities' constant noise. Others said that they experience health problems caused by disrupted sleep, and some residents described an inability to concentrate on tasks. A common theme was poorer quality of life, with some residents avoiding their decks and yards because the sound is louder outdoors." Moreover, noise studies have shown that even when one adapts to hearing particular noises and may not notice them as much, the body still reacts by releasing cortisol, the negative health impacts of which are widely known and documented. If Albemarle County decides to move forward with data centers at any time, there are recommendations from the aforementioned report to help guard against problematic noise. First, it should "develop a supplemental noise limit defined using a metric that better accounts for low frequency sounds, such as 'C-weighted' decibels," as A-weighted decibels do not fully capture the lower frequency noise that data centers produce. Second, because "state law limits civil penalties for noise ordinance violations to \$500 after the first offense," the fine is not a deterrent to wealthy companies that own data centers, so noise restrictions should be addressed in zoning ordinances which can better, "prescribe a process for measuring potential noise violations and penalties for not addressing them." Air pollution is another significant risk to the health of residents. Take what has been happening in Memphis as an example. A data center supporting xAI has been running enough methane turbines without emission controls to power 280,000 homes. At first xAI lied and said they were not, but when the SELC proved otherwise, they argued that the turbines are "temporary" and as such, do not require federal permits for emitting hazardous air pollutants like nitrogen oxides, formaldehyde, and fine particulate matter due to an apparent loophole in federal regulations. These dangerous pollutants cause COPD, asthma, cancer, and heart disease, and the local community has seen notable increases in these diseases since the onset of the turbines. The air smells like gas and is so polluted that residents in the neighborhoods closest to the data center wear masks outdoors. Neighbors have been fighting against this to no avail, and in fact, xAI is now slated to build an even larger data center there. If Albemarle County allows data centers, it is risky to tie our regulations to EPA Tier 4. Given the current goals and actions of the federal government, and specifically the EPA, there is no guarantee that those regulations will not be gutted or removed. Additionally, there needs to be a way to prevent companies from abusing the "temporary" generator loophole. Data centers can consume millions of gallons of drinking water per day for cooling, which can be mitigated by using closed-loop systems, but there are still other

water-related risks. In communities such as Newton County, Georgia, construction of a data center appears to have impacted wells of neighboring homes 1,000 feet away. Water pressure is decimated and taps run dry. Sediment causes water to be brown and undrinkable. Sediment build-up clogs taps and causes new appliances to wear out in only 2-3 years. The problems are severe but neighbors have been unable to sell their homes to escape. Another risk comes from water discharged from flushing even closed loop systems. That wastewater can contain contaminants such as heavy metals and chemicals that prevent bacterial growth, corrosion, and freezing. If not properly treated, this poses a risk to ecosystems and human health. If Albemarle County permits data centers to be built, there must be a way to ensure that discharged water meets strict regulatory standards to protect environmental and public health. Ideally, companies' water usage should also be public information to promote transparency. Data centers must also be far enough from homes with wells not to put their water at risk. Jobs created by data centers are certainly not green and tend to be mostly from construction. There is also an opportunity cost of allowing data centers to be built on land, which is a finite resource, by preventing other companies that could have used that space from building businesses that bring more permanent or green jobs to the area. Beyond the problems associated with data centers in general, the draft ordinance's overlay districts seem problematic in their proximity to homes and recreation. The Emerson/Rivanna Futures and the Airport Industrial Area/North Fork Industrial Park overlays clearly contain homes. The Pantops overlay is only a few hundred feet from homes and overlaps Riverview Park and the Rivanna Trail. The I-64/Route 29 overlay is also only a few hundred feet from homes. With regard to the proposed size of data centers, if they were to be allowed, consider that the larger they can be, the bigger and richer the companies that will be attracted here, and the richer the company, seemingly the less accountable they are. This is because communities simply cannot match their resources, making it especially difficult to fight them if they break the law. In conclusion, data centers should not be allowed in Albemarle County at this time due to their specific risks and incompatibility with the Albemarle County Climate Action Plan. However, this could change as technology continues to improve, and as such, the decision should be revisited periodically.

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

I am really thankful that Albemarle County is considering data centers with the seriousness they require. Data centers mar the landscape, suck up natural resources and are harmful to people who live, work and play nearby. Look to Loudoun & Prince William Counties to the northwest for what NOT to do. Build data centers smaller than requested and far away from homes, businesses and parks. Counting on data center tax revenue is a very risky move. Read more here:

https://www.insidenova.com/culpeper/opinion/guest-opinion-banking-on-data-center-tax-revenue-wait-before-cashing-that-check/article_cfe8b9c0-0413-11f0-80c0-83f03dc56111.html

Consider what will be the repercussions not if, but WHEN a data center breaks the sound threshold the county sets, or builds too large, or uses too many resources, etc. Usually the data center owners will just pay fines, but that doesn't help citizens, especially those directly affected. Please deny the ability to build centers over the current limit!!

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

Please spare our county these awful buildings! They are ugly, DO NOT generate enough tax revenue and demand too much of our resources.

What feedback would you like to share with our project team?

Without the Data Center overlay map - I can't find it as of 7/26/25 - it's hard to know where we might expect a data center to be built in Albemarle Cty. Generally I don't agree with any of our county used for a data center that supports mining bit coins, thus using our resources (electricity, water, etc) for those not in the county and county residents get the ugly, noise, loss of green space, etc. I think a data center should have more restrictive noise requirements as well, because the noise from them will be constant - without hourly, daily or weekly fluctuation like nearly every other county business. The county should spend effort trying to get out of our "taxation without representation" deal with the City of Charlottesville and keep those tax dollars for county services.

The question that was asked is:

We are opposed to the increase in the allowed size of data centers. We understand from having spoken to county employees at the meeting that the county wants the revenue from the data centers. However, with the overwhelming information regarding the problems caused by data centers, we feel that the new code regulations do not go far enough to protect the citizens of Albemarle County from the inevitable consequences of data centers, especially those of 500,000 sq feet and higher. The county should be setting an example by limiting the size (no larger than 100,00sq ft) and scope and requiring that data centers provide their own water sources. We should also require that they re-equip at least every 5 years, since the county income will come from business equipment property taxes (I was told). -Why base the tax on a depreciable asset?? Why not require a certain standard of construction in the code to insure that our data centers

don't deteriorate as quickly as others in Virginia. I have read the the construction is so cheap that companies just abandon them when they can no longer be used, rather than repair them. There are so many negatives here and the majority of citizens are totally unaware of the negative consequences to this code change. Instead of Leading, the county is Following and masking this as progress. Can we: -Limit size to 100,000 sq ft? -Require a construction standard that would insure at least a 25 year life span for the building? -Include a penalty for abandoning a data center building? Require strict oversight of water usage and monitor problems with neighboring wells? What if the trees, etc don't mitigate the noise--than what? What about when our electric bills increase by 30%? What about when Dominion increases tower heights and size by 50% to accommodate the data centers?

The question that was asked is:

If Data Centers are to be built in Albemarle County, there should be a benefit to each county taxpayer, as has been done in Loudoun County. Here's a reference: Data centers in Loudoun County, Virginia, significantly benefit taxpayers by generating substantial tax revenue, which reduces the tax burden on residents. In 2024, data centers added \$16 billion to the county's real property portfolio, totaling \$41 billion, and they account for nearly half of the county's property tax revenues. This revenue has enabled Loudoun County to lower its real property tax rate consistently over the past decade while funding essential services like schools, roads, mental health counseling, family services, affordable housing, and parks. For instance, the FY 2026 budget projects \$1.2 billion in county revenues (38% of total funding) from data centers, allowing a reduction in the real property tax rate to 80.5 cents per \$100 of assessed value and a 67-cent cut in the vehicle tax rate. Additionally, data centers have supported a \$111.8 million increase in funding for Loudoun County Public Schools and added 240 new county positions.