

# Data Center Ordinance

Text Amendment to DeKalb County's Code of Ordinance

**DeKalb County Planning & Sustainability Department**

Tricia Prevost, AICP, *Senior Planner*

Eva Chauveau, *Planner*

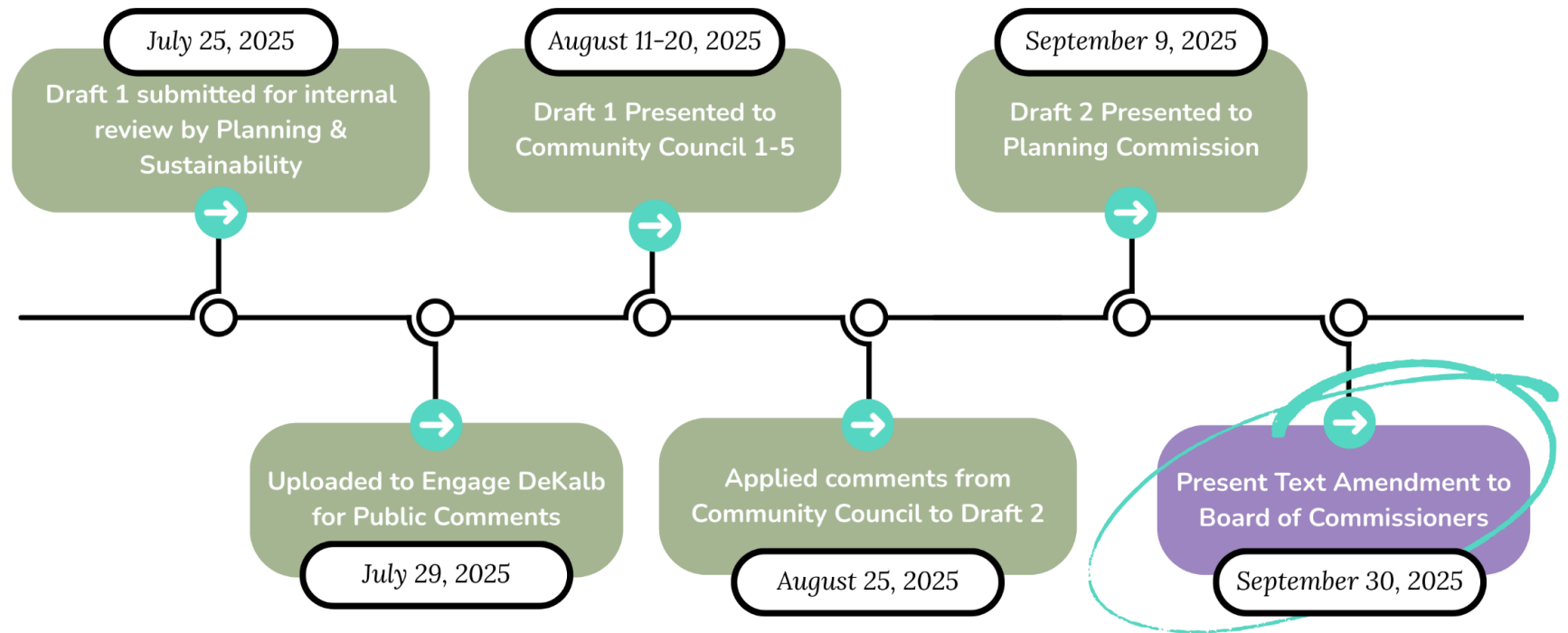


# Summary

- ❖ Sharp increase in data center development throughout the metro area.
- ❖ Currently, DeKalb County has no standards for data centers.
- ❖ We conducted research into impacts/benefits of data centers and the regulations of other jurisdictions in the region.
- ❖ Goal of policy recommendations :
  - ❖ Ensure a balance between economic development and the welfare of the community
  - ❖ Implement regulations to address data center location, design, and energy consumption.

# Timeline of Review

Data Center Text Amendment  
Drafting Process



# Research and Regional Outlook

## Research:

- Data Center Industry professionals
- Decide DeKalb
- Georgia Power
- ARC and other jurisdictions
- Operations and impacts of existing data centers in the region and County

## Regional Policy

- City of Atlanta: Defines data centers and provides regulations focusing on distance requirements from high-density centers and walkable corridors, such as proximity to MARTA stations and the Beltline Overlay District.
- Fairfax County, VA: Defines data centers and requires a special exception in all industrial zoning districts in addition to supplemental regulations such as a noise study and architectural standards.
- Buncombe County, NC: Defines data centers and permits them in commercial zoning districts and requires a noise study and architectural standards.

# Gathering Information from Industry Experts

Promoting Partnership and  
Collaboration



# Classifications

**Data Center, Minor:** Less than 20,000 sqft, does not require a dedicated substation, and operates under 5 MWh . This includes data centers as an accessory use if under 2,000 sqft.

**Data Center, Major:** 20,000 sq ft or larger, operates at a load of more than 5 MWh, and requires a dedicated substation. These may vary widely in size and load, up to 500,000 sq ft and up to 50 MWh

**Data Center, Campus:** A singular development containing more than one building, with a minimum total square footage of 500,000 sq ft and minimum load capacity of 45 MWh.

# What are the 3 critical aspects of Data Centers?

Building out regulations that understand *noise*, *power*, and *water* consumption.

*Design concerns have also been laid out in our text amendment draft.*

- **Water**
  - Require closed loop system for cooling
  - Working with Watershed Management to understand how we can make this system more efficient and have minimal impact on water pressure for DeKalb County
- **Energy**
  - Substation required for any data center above 20,000 sqft
  - All applicants will be required to submit a letter confirming compliance with utility provider
  - Transmission Line Impact Assessment and Energy Consumption Plan required
- **Noise**
  - Generator testing currently has designated hours during the week for testing
  - Noise Impact Assessment required if within 300 ft of residential or conservation open space
  - Decibel limit following noise ordinance for industrial and commercial zoned districts

## Addressing Design Concerns

- ❖ Ensure large, landscaped buffers are created and maintained.
- ❖ Exposed equipment such as substations and generators will be screened from view and behind the primary building.
- ❖ Architectural design guidelines taken from the self-storage facility regulations will avoid blank-box buildings.



# Additional Regulation Requirements

[Draft 2]

All applications for SLUP for a data center, shall include :

- ❖ *Noise Impact Assessment*
- ❖ *Water Consumption Plan*
- ❖ *Water Conservation & Sustainability Plan*
- ❖ *Energy Consumption Plan*
- ❖ *Transmission Line Impact Assessment*
- ❖ *Tree Preservation Reforestation Plan*
- ❖ *Stormwater Management Plan*

A SLUP shall be required for any building expansion that equals or exceeds twenty (20) percent of building square footage.

# Use Table

Allowed in following Land Uses:

- Light Industrial
- Industrial

			USE TABLE 4.1	
Data Centers	OI	OD	M	M-2
INDUSTRIAL				
Data Center, <i>Minor</i>	Pa	P	P	P
Data Center, <i>Major</i> (in Industrial and Light Industrial Character Areas)	SP	SP	SP	SP
Data Center, <i>Campus</i> (in Industrial and Light Industrial Character Areas)			SP	SP
Data Centers, <i>Major or Campus in all other Character Areas</i>				
P - Permitted use		SA - Special administrative permit from director of planning		
Pa - Permitted as an accessory use		SP - Special land use permit from BoC (SLUP)		
TABLE 6.2 Off-Street Parking Ratios				
Use	Minimum Parking Spaces Required		Maximum Parking Spaces Allowed	
INDUSTRIAL				
Heavy and light industrial, data centers			One (1) space for each two thousand five hundred (2,500) square feet of floor area	

**We want to hear from you!**

**What about this ordinance  
do you like?**

**What can be improved?**