



DATE: July 31, 2025

TO: Suzanne Mesich, City Clerk

FROM: Regina Romero, Mayor

SUBJECT: Proposed Action to Manage Data Centers Responsibly in Tucson

Various Arizona cities including Phoenix, Tempe, Mesa, Glendale, Chandler, Marana and Avondale have either recently established or are currently considering zoning requirements and other regulations that apply to data center developments. These regulations are intended to mitigate the potential negative impacts of data centers while protecting residents, workers, and ratepayers and preserving natural resources and the environment.

As part of the Study Session discussion of the Project Blue proposal that is scheduled for August 6th, I am requesting that the City Manager be prepared to initiate a review and evaluation of the types of data center regulations that have been adopted or are under consideration in other Arizona jurisdictions, with the goal of developing a clear regulatory framework in Tucson that will ensure that the City has guardrails in place for data center development, and that will provide the greatest protections to our residents while supporting economic development and wealth generation in our community.

I am requesting the City Manager to initiate an expeditious process that will explore potential regulations and policies that could include consideration of the following:

- Zoning and development codes that define “data centers” and provide for reasonable regulation;
- Potential amendments to plans and policies regarding land use, residential density maps, water infrastructure, utilities and/or transportation as they might relate to data centers;
- Regulations that align with climate goals as outlined in Tucson Resilient Together, particularly energy use, our goal of carbon neutrality by 2045 and heat mitigation efforts;

- Incentives and/or requirements for using renewable energy and implementing advanced technologies for efficient cooling in order to preserve our natural resources;
- Parameters for assuring we have an enforceable and feasible net neutral or positive water framework;
- Requirements to mitigate noise, heat and other possible impacts of this type of development; and to require design review.
- Strategies for implementing Plan Tucson policies to support this process.

Of course, I would expect that the process to evaluate and recommend a proposed regulatory framework would address key concerns already raised in the recent community meetings and will include engagement with Pima County regarding relevant environmental, health, conservation, air quality and permitting requirements related to data centers. The review process should include engagement with area union partners to incorporate as much as possible their feedback. It would also include continuing efforts to track developments at the state level including at the Arizona Corporation Commission as they relate to the protection of utility ratepayers.

Attach: Summary: Data Center Regulations in Arizona

CC:
City Council Members
City Manager, Tim Thomure
City Attorney, Mike Rankin