



DATE:
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TO:
Tulsa City Councilors

FROM:
Susan Miller, AICP

City Council initiation of zoning code amendments regarding data centers

On November 6, 2024, City Council adopted an ordinance defining data centers and establishing zoning standards for this use. The zoning code describes data centers as:

"A facility or facilities used to house, and in which are operated, maintained and replaced from time to time, computer systems and associated components, including but not limited to telecommunications and storage systems, cooling systems, power supplies and systems for managing electrical and mechanical performance, and equipment used for the transformation, transmission, distribution and management of electricity for on-site uses, internet-related equipment, data communications connections, private communication towers, environmental controls and security devices."

At that time, data centers were included under Low-impact Manufacturing and Industry based on knowledge of data centers at the time. Low-impact Manufacturing and Industry uses are described as not generating noticeable off-site impacts in terms of noise, smoke, particulate matter, odors, or vibration as part of their normal operations. Historically, data centers in Tulsa were of smaller scale and did not generate potential impacts that have now become associated with new large scale data centers. Initiation of amendments to the zoning code regarding data centers will allow us time to evaluate the full scope of potential off-site impacts to determine if the use was categorized appropriately.

Councilor Bellis has requested this initiation and asked Planning Office to re-evaluate data center regulations in the City of Tulsa Zoning Code. If the City Council chooses to initiate the re-evaluation and potential amendments, the Planning Office will develop a proposal and bring it to the TMAPC and City Council for consideration.