



Data Centers

Land Use Policy Committee
March 12, 2024

Tracy Strunk, Director
Department of Planning and Development

Guidelines for data centers project

Board Matter

- May 9, 2023
- Directed staff to provide research, findings, and recommendations

Staff Report

- January 9, 2024
- Report and recommendations

Next Steps

- Today's discussion
- Possible approaches
- Timeline

What is a data center?



Existing permissions

- By right up to maximum size and larger with repurposing or SE:
 - C-3 and C-4 (office) by right up to 40,000 GFA
 - I-2 and I-3 by right up to 80,000 GFA
- I-4, I-5, I-6 allowed by right with no maximum size
- PRC, PDC, PTC allowed via an approved development plan

TABLE 4101.1: Use Table for Residential, Commercial, and Industrial Districts																														
P = permitted; SE = special exception; SP = special permit; blank cell = not allowed																														
A = allowed as accessory use only; A+ = permitted as an associated service use; AP = allowed with approval of administrative permit																														
Use	Residential Districts													Commercial Districts								Industrial Districts						Use-Specific Standards NOTE: General Standards also apply		
	R-A	R-C	R-E	R-1	R-2	R-3	R-4	R-5	R-8	R-12	R-16	R-20	R-30	R-MHP	C-1	C-2	C-3	C-4	C-5	C-6	C-7	C-8	I-1	I-2	I-3	I-4	I-5		I-6	
Service																														
Industrial Uses																														
Freight Movement, Warehousing, and Wholesale Distribution: uses involving the movement, storage, and distribution of goods. Goods are generally delivered to other firms or the final consumer.																														
Data Center																	P SE	P SE							P SE	P SE	P	P	P	4102.6.A

Use	PDH		PRC					PDC		PRM		PTC	PCC		Use-Specific Standards NOTE: General Standards also apply
	Principal	Secondary	Residential	Neighborhood Convenience Center	Village Center	Town Center	Convention/Conference Center	Principal	Secondary	Principal	Secondary		Principal	Secondary	
Freight Movement, Warehousing, and Wholesale Distribution: uses involving the movement, storage, and distribution of goods. Goods are generally delivered to other firms or the final consumer.															
Data Center						✓	✓	✓				✓			4102.6.A

Existing zoning district regulations

District	Height (feet)*	Floor Area Ratio (FAR)
C-3 (Office)	90	1.0
C-4 (High Intensity Office)	120	1.65
I-2 (Low Intensity Industrial)	40	0.25
I-3 (Light Intensity Industrial)	75	0.40 (0.50 with SE)
I-4 (Medium Intensity Industrial)	75	0.50 (0.70 with SE)
I-5 (General Industrial)	75	0.50 (1.0 with SE)
I-6 (Heavy Industrial)	75	0.50 (1.0 with SE)
PRC	No maximum	No maximum
PDC	No maximum	2.5 (3.0 or 5.0 in certain areas)
PTC	No maximum	2.5 - no maximum, depending on location

*SE for increase in height allowed in all of these zoning districts

Existing use standards (subsection 4102.6.A)

Data Center

Standards applicable to all data centers:

- (1)** In all districts except the I-4, I-5, and I-6 Districts, all equipment necessary for cooling, ventilating, or otherwise operating the facility must be contained within an enclosed building where the use is located. This includes emergency power generators and other emergency power supply equipment.
- (2)** In the C-3 and C-4 Districts, the maximum size is 40,000 square feet in gross floor area. However, this size limit may be exceeded:
 - (a)** If the use is located in a building existing on May 10, 2023; or
 - (b)** With special exception approval in accordance with subsection 8100.3.
- (3)** In the I-2 and I-3 Districts, the maximum size is 80,000 square feet in gross floor area. However, this size limit may be exceeded:
 - (a)** If the use is located in a building existing on May 10, 2023; or
 - (b)** With special exception approval in accordance with subsection 8100.3.

Update data center use standards - potential near-term enhancements

- Maximum by right size in I-4 through I-6 Districts
- Minimum distance from residential
- Building design standards (façade, entrance, etc.)
- Enclose HVAC and generators in all districts
- Require noise study



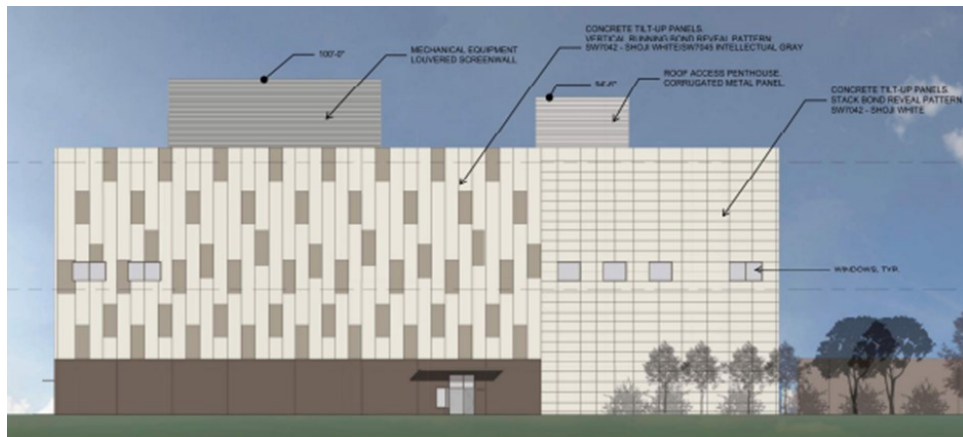
AWS, 3980 Virginia Mallory Dr.

Comprehensive Plan

- Applies during zoning case review
 - Rezoning (and PCAs - amendments)
 - Review for conformance with Comprehensive Plan
 - Special exceptions (and SEAs - amendments)
 - For a use or to allow flexibility to modify/increase a standard (e.g., larger size, height, FAR)
 - Review for harmony with Comprehensive Plan
- Policies that may apply to data centers currently unconsolidated
- Appendix 12 of the Land Use Element of the Policy Plan

Potential updates to the Comprehensive Plan

- Consolidation of guidance for data centers
- Consideration of additional topics as discussed in data center report



Rendering, RE/SE Loisdale Station

Potential Zoning Ordinance Amendment timeline

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- **March 2024 - Board Matter**
 - Direction to staff to begin work
 - **March - May 2024 - Outreach and preparation of text**
 - Development of draft amendment text
 - Outreach to community and industry
 - Authorization to advertise public hearings
 - **June 2024 - Planning Commission**
 - PC committee meeting
 - PC public hearing
 - **July 2024 - Board of Supervisors**
 - Board public hearing

Feedback

- **Comments on proposed enhanced standards**
- **Data Centers by right in current districts**
 - Strengthen and enhance by right standards
 - Special Exception for additional flexibility
- **Data Centers by Special Exception**
- **By Special Exception in lower intensity districts**
By right in higher intensity districts
 - Strengthen and enhance by right standards
 - Special Exception for additional flexibility in by right districts



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT



Questions?

Webpage: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/planning-development/data-centers>

Email: ffx-data-centers@PublicInput.com