

Data Center Text Amendments Case #: PLN2023-00005

Stakeholder Outreach Meeting
July 6, 2023



ADAMS COUNTY
COLORADO



Summary

- Background
- Draft Regulations
 - Definition & Use
 - Performance Standards
 - Permit Process
- Next Steps

Background

- Currently there is no use in the Adams County Development Standards and Regulations that is substantially similar to a data center, data processing facility, or off-grid electrical generation, so it has been determined to be prohibited (May 25, 2022)
- Regulations need to be amended to define the use, allow for the use, and establish performance standards
- Timeline of outreach
 - March 8-15, 2023 – Initial stakeholder meetings and online survey
 - April 13, 2023 – Public Study Session at the Planning Commission
 - April 25, 2023 – Public Study Session at the BoCC
 - June 16, 2023 – Official draft regulations released for public comment

Proposed Definition & Use

- **Data Center Definition:**

Networked computer systems used for data storage and processing for on and/or off-site users. Typical supporting equipment includes back-up batteries and power generators, cooling units, fire suppression systems, and enhanced security features.

- Create a *primary use* and *accessory use* for Data Centers:

- **Primary use:**

- Similar to Light Industrial use
- Permitted in I-1, I-2, and I-3. Conditional Use Permit in C-5
 - Must comply with standards for other allowed uses in defined zone district
- Would still need a Change In Land Use (CIU) permit
 - Generally intended for larger-scale, standalone Data Centers

- **Accessory use:**

- Accessory to: Oil and gas facilities, Geothermal, Solar/wind energy, etc.
- Zone District designations
 - Allowable in A-2, A-3, C-0 through C-5 and I-1 through I-3 (same as OGF permits)
 - Not permitted in residentially zoned areas (ex: RE, R-1-C, R-2 through R-4)
 - Generally intended for smaller, mobile or temporary Data Center use



Draft Performance Standards

Required for all Data Centers as Accessory Uses:

- Site and Access plans:
 - List and placement of all equipment, including primary use equipment and equipment heights
 - Siting of Data Center equipment relative to primary use
 - Distance of Data Center equipment to existing residential uses, schools, or environmentally sensitive areas
 - Access to the site for emergency response, inspections, maintenance and repair
 - Any parking that may be required
- Evaluation of all potential off-site impacts including:
 - Noise, odor, light, visual impacts
 - Applicant proposed best management practices or control measures (where applicable)
- Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan (ERP) that may include:
 - Will Service Letter from the Fire District
 - 24-hour emergency response numbers
 - Information regarding site access and information
- State agency approvals, where applicable – or proof of pending approvals
 - CDPHE, APCD, Colorado Energy and Carbon Management Commission (f.k.a. COGCC)
- Building permits may be required depending on facility
 - i.e., shipping containers, foundations, electrical connections, etc.



Draft Performance Standards

Required for **all** Data Centers as Accessory Uses at Oil and Gas Facilities:

- Automatic safety protective systems
 - Installation, monitoring, and remote control of a surface safety valve or similar
 - Capability to remote shut-in wells on demand
 - Operator must test automated safety systems at least quarterly
 - For any upset or malfunction of the Data Center or associated equipment the source well(s) must be immediately shut-in

- Containment
 - Berms or secondary containment around Data Centers and associated equipment
 - Must be Sufficiently impervious
 - Inspection of berms at least monthly
 - Maintain all berms in good condition
 - Any supply line shall be high temperature flexible hosing to withstand at least maximum discharge pressure of any supplied gas and must be inspected at least monthly
 - Fire suppression system

Draft Performance Standards

- Residential Setbacks from Data Center as an Accessory Use:
 - Setback for Data Centers will match the defined setback from the principal use
 - For example: the setback for oil and gas facilities is 2,000-feet
- Data Centers within 2,000-feet of a residentially used or zoned property line will require:
 - A neighborhood meeting
 - Air quality measures, where applicable, including third-party air quality monitoring
 - Noise impact assessment and mitigation study
 - Visual mitigation, including landscaping and screening may be required

Proposed Permit Process

Primary Use: Change in Land Use and Building permit(s)

Accessory Use: Special Use Permit Process requires approval from the Board of Adjustment (BOA)

- *If any performance standards cannot be met, a variance from the BOA will be needed. This includes variances for setbacks, noise, etc.*

Next Steps

- Public Comment window open until July 10, 2023
 - Staff will review all public comments and consider edits to the draft regulations
- Schedule for hearing at Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners
 - Ensure public hearing notice requirements are met (newspaper)
 - Late August/Early September target
 - Additional opportunity to voice public comment

Background

