

Franklin County Rural Coalition's

# Public Statement Workshop

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# March 17<sup>th</sup> Planning and Zoning Meeting

4 Files related to Data Centers in Franklin County

**File 260036** – The file about the new P and Z regulations for data centers. Impacts the whole county.

**File 250269** – Rezoning the small Diamond Farms LLC property (39.3 acres)

**File 250270** – Rezoning the large Diamond Farms LLC property (574 acres)

**File 260037** – Rezoning the Beltline (BLE) property near Pacific, (490 acres).



# March 17<sup>th</sup> Planning and Zoning Meeting

- You have **3 minutes** to speak
- You must speak to the file being considered at the time
- You may speak on multiple files
- You should show up early! Be there by 5:00, doors open at 5:30.
  - You must fill out a request card to testify no later than 6 pm, or you will not be allowed to testify
  - Only one card, even if you want to address multiple files. You will list them all on the card.

**FCRC Volunteers and County Staff will be there to help.**

# Testimony 101

You have **3 minutes** to

- Introduce yourself
- Tell your story
- Give your position
- Ask the commission what you want them to do that evening



## Remember To

**Tell Your Story**

**Stay on Topic**

**Ask**

# What's your story?



Connect with the commissioners by telling your story.

Are you a long-term resident?

A generational land-owner?

A health care worker?

A parent?



# Stay on Topic



Choose one or two topic to focus on and keep to it.

Remember you only have **3** minutes!

Have more to say? You can also give written testimony on March 17<sup>th</sup>.

# Be Specific

Favor specific examples over generalized statements

## **Compare:**

A. I am worried about the impact of data centers on health

B. I am worried that particulate matter released by diesel generators will cause respiratory illness in children and the elderly.



# Provide Evidence

Data centers in Virginia rely upon over 4,000 diesel back up generators that release particulate matter and nitrous oxide, both of which have been linked to respiratory disease, cardiovascular disease, reduced fertility rates, and cancer (Gour et al. 2026)

[https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/climate/articles/10.3389/fclim.2026.1648912/full?utm\\_source=email-sig&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=100\\_DOWNLOADS&utm\\_campaign=imp\\_mile\\_2024\\_fall\\_en\\_aut-ww](https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/climate/articles/10.3389/fclim.2026.1648912/full?utm_source=email-sig&utm_medium=email&utm_content=100_DOWNLOADS&utm_campaign=imp_mile_2024_fall_en_aut-ww)

**frontiers** | Frontiers in Climate

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**Health implications of the rapid rise of data centers in Virginia: an exploratory assessment**

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Driven by advances in cloud computing, cryptocurrency, and artificial intelligence, the rapid proliferation of data centers may pose severe human and planetary health risks. This paper, to the best of our knowledge, is the first-of-its-kind assessment of the potential health implications associated with data centers. Here, we examine the case of Virginia's Data Center Alley, the world's largest concentrated data center hub, and argue that data centers can cause public health harms, harms that can be at least partially mitigated through improved planning and design. We assess the health risks associated with data centers, including air pollution, extensive water use, noise pollution, and detrimental land use's risk of disrupting natural ecosystems and community well-being. We also address how rising energy costs can worsen social determinants of health. To mitigate these risks, we recommend transitioning data centers to renewable energy, implementing strict regulations to minimize water consumption, and optimizing site planning with acoustic treatments and green zoning to reduce noise pollution. Additionally, we advocate enforcing responsible site selection and zoning regulations to curb adverse land use changes, equitable energy pricing to alleviate economic burdens, and strengthening health communication for informed public and governmental decision-making, action-oriented advocacy, and policy changes. Finally, we emphasize the need for transdisciplinary research integrating physical sciences, engineering, and public health to quantify specific health outcomes linked to data centers.

**KEYWORDS**  
advocacy, climate change, data centers, public health, sustainable development

**Introduction**

The surge in demand for computing infrastructure, driven by advancements in cloud services, cryptocurrency, and artificial intelligence, has led to extensive data center construction globally (Masanet et al., 2020; International Energy Agency, 2024). There is a small but growing body of research on societal problems associated with data centers (see Al,

# Call to Action

Ask the Commissioners at the March 17<sup>th</sup> meeting to:

- postpone making a decision that night.
- consider all submitted testimony, oral and written.
- take time to create regulations that protect Franklin County
- table the vote until a future date



# Writing Workshop

## Writing- 10 minutes

- Take a few minutes to outline what you want to say
- Don't worry about the quality of the first draft
- Revise your first draft
- Remember to
  - Introduce yourself
  - Introduce your stance
  - Introduce any evidence
  - Stay on topic

# Writing Workshop

## Feedback: 15 Minutes

- Pair up with someone
  - Preferably that you don't know. I know it's scary.
  - But your friends know your story already and might not notice gaps.
- Take turns:
  - 4 minutes - Share what you wrote during the break.
  - 3ish minutes - Give feedback on what you thought was effective or could use improvement
    - I liked it when you said W.
    - I thought X was a great point.
    - I was confused about what you meant by Y
    - Maybe elaborate on Z.

# Before the meeting

- Write down your statement
- Practice
- Time yourself
- Invite your friends, family, co-workers, and neighbors
- Bring people with you



# At the Meeting

- Be in line by 5:00 to 5:30 pm
- Wear RED
- No signs allowed in
- Bring what you need (water, snacks)
- Wear comfortable shoes and clothes
- Stay after your statement to support other community member

The only way we win is if we stick together!

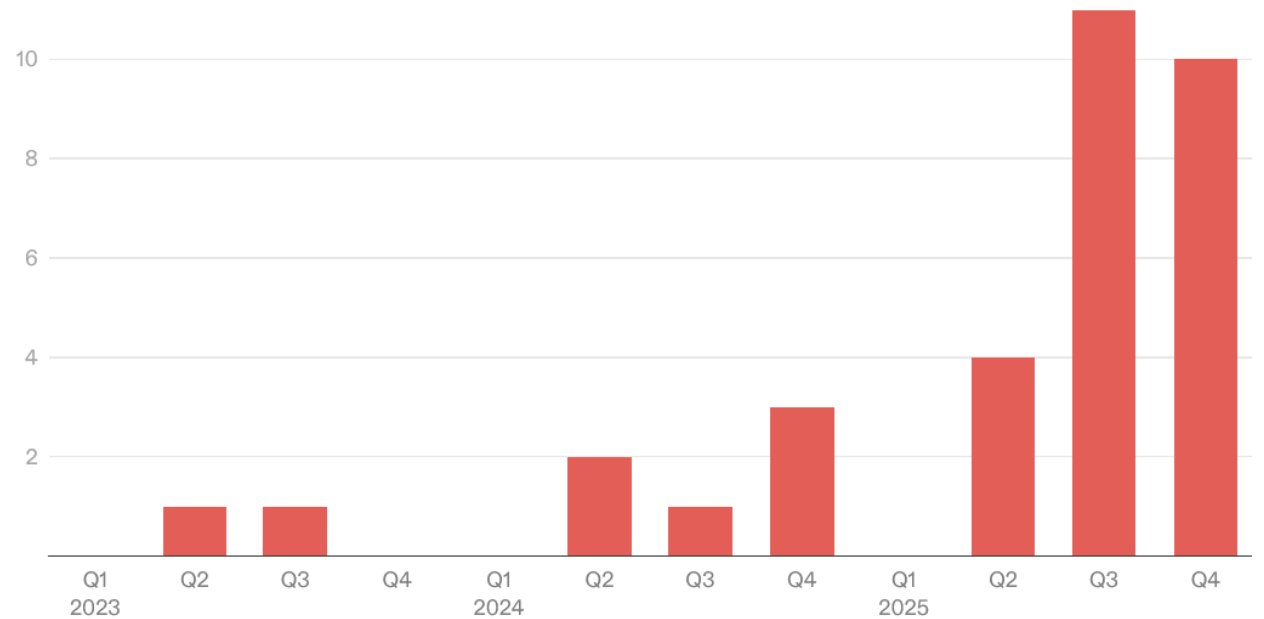


# Keep Fighting!

- Last year, at least 25 data center projects were cancelled due to pushback by local citizens.

## U.S. Data Center Cancellations Surged in 2025

Proposed data center projects canceled after sustained local protests, by quarter



Source: Heatmap Pro • [Embed](#) • [Download image](#)



# Remember To

**Tell Your Story**

**Stay on Topic**

**Ask for what  
we want!**

# Most importantly - SHOW UP!

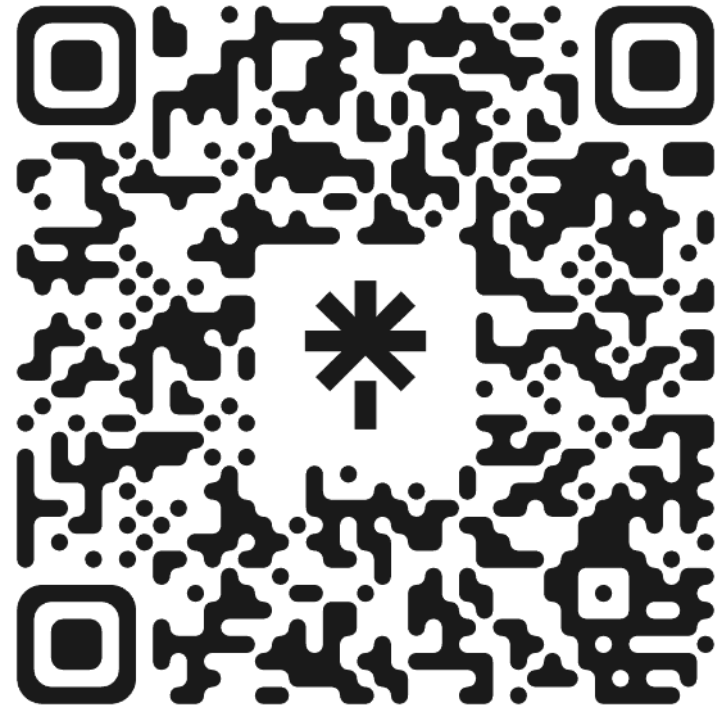
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Franklin County Rural Coalition Link Tree