

From: [Charyne Tovar](#)
To: [Melissa Patterson Hazley](#); [Willett, Nathan](#); [Bunch, Eric](#); [Parks-Shaw, Ryana](#); [Williamson, Annie](#); [Iden, Marissa](#); [McCoy, Keema](#); [Clerk, Yearwood, DJ](#)
Subject: Concerns on data centers and Amend Zoning Code for Data Centers
Date: Tuesday, December 9, 2025 12:45:02 PM

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Dear Neighborhoods Planning and Development Committee,

This is the first time I have ever reached out on a concern regarding our city. Usually, I just let issues go because I feel that my voice would not be heard, but I feel strongly about my concerns over the number of data centers that are being built in our community without oversight and research.

I urge you to ask for amendments to the currently proposed zoning code being brought to the Neighborhoods Planning and Development committee on Dec. 9th. The zoning code proposed for data centers, as currently drafted, is insufficient in protecting the interests and health of everyday Kansas Citians.

There have been many reports and some studies on the health impacts of these data centers, the use of resources that are not infinite, as well as environmental impacts. In a time where our federal government is not putting quality of life of the people before profits of large corporations, I feel that our local government should not follow this same path. The approval of data centers feels as though this committee is putting profits over the risks of the people and our environment. The Harvard Business Review released their concerns regarding AI data centers stating “ These massive facilities not only strain already stressed power grids but also create air pollution, including fine particulate matter, resulting in significant respiratory-related health consequences that are estimated to cost up to \$20 billion per year in the United States by 2028.” These concerns top my concerns as well, especially as a resident of the northland. Our utility bills are already skyrocketing in a time where it is getting harder and harder to get by and to just afford the necessities in life. My family cannot handle undo increases in our utility bills, which the data centers will cause. Also, I do not an increase in our health risks, especially when our federal government is also rolling back EPA restrictions. This is going to cause unnecessary illness, strain on our already struggling health system, and even possible increases in death.

Not only will it impact me personally, but it is also going to impact our environment. It is well documented that the noise generated from these facilities are higher than the 85 decibels that are considered safe. This impacts wildlife and those living nearby. Furthermore, these data centers use so many resources including water. Water is not an infinite resource, and in a time where droughts are becoming more common, diverting water to a data center over making sure we are conserving for the community is not wise. They are a resource grab, and their benefit return does not outweigh the risks in my opinion.

I urge you to be proactive about minimizing these harms by creating a zoning code that allows for more oversight in the following ways. The data center zoning code should:

1. Be its own zoning code rather than lumped in with Large Format Uses.
2. Require special-use permits for data centers that are voted on and approved by the city council.

3. Include environmental impact studies.
4. Include environmental protections such as limiting water usage/cooling requirements and limiting fossil-fuel generators (including back-ups).
5. Require utility demand disclosure.
6. Require ample distance from residential neighborhoods.

If data center development is allowed to continue as is, Kansas Citians will be forced to bear the brunt of the cost of utility rate increases, resource extraction, and pollution. Do right by Kansas Citians and demand a more thorough zoning code for data centers.

Thank you,
Charyne Tovar