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6/23/26

**RESOLUTION NO. 14,064**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE WOODBURY COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS** ESTABLISHING A TWELVE (12) MONTH MORATORIUM ON THE ACCEPTANCE, PROCESSING, AND APPROVAL OF APPLICATIONS FOR ALL CLASSES OF DATA CENTERS WITHIN THE UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF WOODBURY COUNTY, IOWA

WHEREAS, the Woodbury County Board of Supervisors ("Board") is vested with the authority to protect the public health, safety, and general welfare of county residents, and to regulate land uses within the unincorporated areas of the County pursuant to Chapters 331 and 335 of the Code of Iowa; and

WHEREAS, data centers have begun to emerge nationwide as large-scale industrial facilities that vary significantly in size, operational intensity, environmental impact, water and energy demand, noise generation, and compatibility with surrounding land uses; and

WHEREAS, such facilities may involve substantial levels of water use, electrical consumption, continuous mechanical noise generation, large-scale cooling infrastructure, accessory substations, emergency backup power systems, and other related components that may pose unique and significant land-use impacts on surrounding properties, natural resources, public services, and rural quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the Board finds that the County's current zoning ordinance does not specifically include modern data centers as a specific land use category in the zoning ordinance's land use summary table; and

WHEREAS, the Board wishes to engage in a thorough review of its zoning ordinance, including but not limited to definitions, siting requirements, use classifications, performance standards, environmental protections, and public infrastructure considerations related to data centers; and

WHEREAS, the Board finds that the acceptance or approval of new applications for data centers during this period of study could undermine the purpose of such review, could expose Woodbury County to incompatible land uses, and could jeopardize the County's ability to develop consistent and protective zoning standards; and

WHEREAS, temporary moratoria of reasonable duration are a recognized and lawful planning tool used by counties throughout Iowa to prevent development from occurring under outdated regulations while comprehensive studies and ordinance updates are being completed; and

WHEREAS, the Board finds that establishing a temporary moratorium on data center applications is necessary and reasonable to protect public health, safety, and welfare while the county studies the issue and develops appropriate regulations.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Woodbury County Board of Supervisors that:**

**1. Moratorium Established.**

A temporary moratorium is hereby enacted prohibiting the **acceptance, processing, consideration, or approval** of any zoning, subdivision, site plan, conditional use, building permit, rezoning, or other development applications for **any type or class of data center** within the unincorporated areas of Woodbury County.

**2. Definitions.**

For purposes of this Resolution, the term **"data center"** shall include any facility primarily used for the centralized storage, management, processing, or transmission of digital data; and any facility whose principal use involves high-density servers, information technology equipment, specialized mechanical cooling systems, or related digital infrastructure. This definition is intended to be interpreted broadly and includes enterprise data centers, colocation data centers, hyperscale data centers, server farms, cloud-computing facilities, and similar operations.

**3. Geographic Scope.**

This moratorium applies **only** to properties located within the **unincorporated territory of Woodbury County, Iowa**.

**4. Duration.**

This moratorium shall remain in effect for **twelve (12) months** from the date of its adoption, unless earlier rescinded or extended by subsequent resolution of the Board.

**5. Existing Facilities and Applications.**

This moratorium shall **not** apply to:

a. Legally established existing data center facilities currently in operation;
b. Applications that have received all required final approvals prior to the effective date of this Resolution;
c. Routine maintenance, repair, or upgrades to existing lawful facilities that do not constitute expansion or the establishment of a new data center use.

**6. Direction to County Staff.**

a. County staff, including Community and Economic Development (Planning and Zoning) and other relevant departments, are hereby directed to:

a. Conduct a comprehensive review of zoning provisions related to data centers with the Planning & Zoning Commission;
b. Propose updated definitions, standards, and regulatory frameworks designed to address modern data-center land-use impacts;
c. Present draft recommendations to the Planning & Zoning Commission and Board for further consideration.
d. Consult with the County Attorney's Office regarding the legal and regulatory implications of the proposed changes.

**7. Severability.**

If any portion of this Resolution is determined to be invalid or unenforceable by a court of competent jurisdiction, such determination shall not affect the validity of the remaining provisions.

**8. Effective Date.**

This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its passage and approval.

**Passed and approved this 23rd day of June, 2026.**

**THE WOODBURY COUNTY, IOWA BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Mark Nelson, Chairman

David Dietrich, Vice-Chairman

Daniel Bittinger II

Kent Carper

Matthew Ung

Attest:

~~Michelle K. Skaff, Woodbury County~~ Auditor
Shona Campbell, Deputy