



SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL
CENTRAL STAFF

Data Center Policy Development Resolution

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PARKS AND CITY LIGHT COMMITTEE

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Data centers

Facilities used primarily for:

- the housing, operation, or co-location of computer and communications equipment;
- handling, storing, managing, processing, and backing up of digital data; and
- associated infrastructure such as cooling systems, backup power systems, and battery storage.

The growth in the use of artificial intelligence (AI) has led to rapidly accelerating demand for new data centers.

Impacts

- Electrical grid capacity and reliability;
- Water usage;
- Utility rates;
- Land use and development;
- Jobs and the economy; and
- Public health – noise, light, water, and air pollution

Policy goals

- Reduce or mitigate any deleterious effects;
- Hold data center investors and operators accountable;
- Harvest and maximize any benefits of data centers

Related legislation

- Data Center Moratorium (Moratorium) ordinance
- City Light rates ordinance with new customer class for data centers

Coordinated action

- Citywide, interdepartmental study on impacts and benefits of data centers and
- Work plan upon passage of the Moratorium Ordinance:
 - Consult with external groups and stakeholders, including those listed in the Moratorium work plan and others: labor unions, building trades, energy policy and environmental organizations, Washington State AI Task Force, the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, consumer protection advocates, neighborhood groups, tribes, and impacted industry stakeholders;
 - Develop updates to zoning and development regulations
 - Develop updates to rate structures for City Light and Seattle Public Utilities
 - Voluntary data center community benefits

Amendment 1

Sponsor: Councilmember Juarez

- Update title;
- Add recital regarding cumulative impacts;
- Shift from “recognize” to “study” in Section 1 and 2;
and
- Clarify Section 4 about data center customer class

Amendment 2

Sponsor: Councilmember Strauss

- Add treaty rights to the list of potential impacts in Section 1

“The rights of Federally Recognized Tribes, Urban Indians, and native communities to exercise any express or implied treaty rights to access and fish in all usual and accustomed places as has occurred since time immemorial.”

Questions?