

The Department of Community Development

City Hall, Lynchburg, VA 24504 **434-455-3900**

To: Planning Commission
From: Planning Division
Date: May 27, 2025
Re: ***ZONING ORDINANCE*** AMENDMENT(s): Amend Section 35.2-113, Definitions; Amend Sections 35.2-45, 35.2-46, 35.2-47, 35.2-48, 35.2-50, 35.2-51, 35.2-52, 35.2-53; Create New Section 35.2-72.29, Data Centers; and Amend Appendix A, Table of Authorized Land Uses

I. PETITIONER

City of Lynchburg, 900 Church Street, Lynchburg, Virginia 24504

Representative: Rachel Frischeisen, City Planner, Community Development, 900 Church Street, Lynchburg, Virginia 24504

Property Owner: N/A

II. LOCATION

The proposed *Zoning Ordinance* Amendments would permit data centers by conditional use permit in the I-1, Limited Industrial District, I-2, Light Industrial District, I-3 Heavy Industrial District, and IN-2, Institutional District 2, subject to the standards as proposed in a new Section 35.2-72.29, Data Centers.

III. PURPOSE

The purpose of the *Zoning Ordinance* Amendment is to:

- Define “data centers.”
- Amend the description of LBCS 4244, “data processing and management, hosting and related services”
- Set zoning standards for data centers within the City.
- Permit data centers, upon approval of a Conditional Use Permit, within the I-1, Limited Industrial District, I-2, Light Industrial District, I-3 Heavy Industrial District, and IN-2, Institutional District 2

IV. SUMMARY

- On September 10, 2025, Planning Commission directed staff (6-0) to initiate the process of amending the Zoning Ordinance to regulate data centers.
- There are currently no data centers located within the City of Lynchburg.
- Data Centers are currently permitted by right under LBCS 4244, “data processing and management, hosting and related services” in the B-1, Limited Business District, B-3, Community Business District, B-4, Urban Commercial District, B-5, General Business District, IN-2, Institutional District 2, I-1, Restricted Industrial Districts, I-2, Light Industrial Districts, and I-3, Heavy Industrial Districts.

Planning Commission directed staff to initiate amendments to the Zoning Ordinance.

V. FINDINGS OF FACT

1. **Comprehensive Plan.** On a day-to-day basis, the City's development regulations (zoning and subdivision regulations) are essential tools for implementation of the *Comprehensive Plan*. Updates to these regulations should be consistent with the Plan to ensure that requests support the Plan's vision goals and policies. (p.41) Land Use Goal 2.6 states "Promote the economic vitality of commercial corridors and efficient use of employment areas through: Coordination of public and private sector investments that continue to enhance their function and attractiveness; and Protection of the areas from encroachment of uses that would inhibit their efficient use". (p.15)
2. **Zoning.** The *Zoning Ordinance* was adopted by City Council on February 23, 2016.
3. **Proffers.** N/A
4. **Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA).** N/A
5. **Surrounding Area.** N/A
6. **Site Description.** N/A
7. **Proposed Use of Property.** N/A
8. **Traffic, Parking and Public Transit.** N/A
9. **Stormwater Management.** N/A
10. **Emergency Services:** N/A
11. **Impact.** The proposed *Zoning Ordinance* amendments would not prohibit the establishment of a data center, but would limit the zoning districts in which they may be located subject to a conditional use permit and the proposed standards. Given the significant impacts of a data center on water, energy, surrounding land uses, and other factors, it is appropriate to provide opportunities for neighborhood input through public hearings and oversight by City Council through the issuance of Conditional Use Permits for these facilities.
12. **Technical Review Committee.** N/A

VI. MOTION

Based on the preceding Findings of Fact, the Planning Commission recommends to City Council approval of amending the Zoning Ordinance as provided in the proposed ordinance accompanying this recommendation and, in summary, as follows: amending Section 35.2-113, Definitions; Amend Sections 35.2-45, 35.2-46, 35.2-47, 35.2-48, 35.2-50, 35.2-51, 35.2-52, 35.2-53; Create New Section 35.2-72.29, Data Centers; and Amend Appendix A, Table of Authorized Land Uses

This matter is respectfully offered for your consideration.



Rachel Frischeisen
City Planner

pc: Wynter Benda, City Manager
Greg Patrick, Deputy City Manager
Kent White, Assistant City Manager
Tom Martin, Director of Community Development
Matthew Freedman, City Attorney
J. Lee Newland, City Engineer
Cynthia Kozerow, Lynchburg Police Department
Candace Brown, Fire Marshal
Doug Saunders, Building Official
Kevin Henry, Zoning Administrator

VII. ATTACHMENTS

1. Proposed Ordinance

Data Center Ordinance

May 27, 2026

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

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