



Committee: Joint
Committee Review: At a future date
Staff: Ludeen McCartney-Green, Legislative Attorney
Purpose: To introduce agenda item – no vote expected
Keywords: #datacentertaskforce

AGENDA ITEM #1D
January 20, 2026
Introduction

SUBJECT

Bill 4-26, Buildings – Task Force on Data Centers – Established

Lead Sponsor: Councilmember Glass

EXPECTED ATTENDEES

None

COUNCIL DECISION POINTS & COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

- N/A; Introduction

DESCRIPTION/ISSUE

Bill 4-26 would:

- (1) establish a task force to study the potential risks and benefits of data centers in the County;
- (2) require the task force to produce a report that identifies the impacts of data centers and evaluates the feasibility of potential legislative, policy, or zoning changes; and
- (3) generally amend the law regarding data centers in the County.

SUMMARY OF KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- N/A

This report contains:

Staff Report
Bill 4-26

Pages 1-2
© 1

Alternative format requests for people with disabilities. If you need assistance accessing this report you may [submit alternative format requests](#) to the ADA Compliance Manager. The ADA Compliance Manager can also be reached at 240-777-6197 (TTY 240-777-6196) or at adacompliance@montgomerycountymd.gov

MEMORANDUM

January 15, 2026

TO: County Council

FROM: Ludeen McCartney-Green, Legislative Attorney

SUBJECT: Bill 4-26, Buildings – Task Force on Data Centers – Established

PURPOSE: Introduction – no Council votes required

Bill 4-26, Buildings – Task Force on Data Centers – Established, sponsored by Lead Sponsor Councilmember Glass, is scheduled for introduction on January 20, 2026. A public hearing is tentatively scheduled for February 24 at 1:30 p.m., and a joint committee worksession with Economic Development (ECON) and Transportation and Environment (TE) will be scheduled at a later date.

Bill 4-26 would:

- (1) establish a task force to study the potential risks and benefits of data centers in the County;
- (2) require the task force to produce a report that identifies the impacts of data centers and evaluates the feasibility of potential legislative, policy, or zoning changes; and
- (3) generally amend the law regarding data centers in the County.

PURPOSE

The purpose of Bill 4-26 is to explore the benefits and potential economic and environmental impacts of data center development in the County. To better understand community concerns around data center development and gather community and stakeholder opinions to inform future planning and policy recommendations.

BILL SPECIFICS

Bill 4-26 would establish a task force on data centers that consists of 15 voting members. The task force would study the impact of data centers in the County to advise the County Council and District Council. Specifically, the task force would study, assess, and produce a report that includes the following:

1. a definition of "data center" specific to the County;

2. the potential impact of data centers on existing and future local energy demands and the County taxpayers' ability to meet future energy demands;
3. the potential environmental impact of data centers on air, water, and woodland quality and supply in the County, including recommended measures to mitigate negative impacts;
4. recommendations related to potential locations and policies for the siting of data center uses;
5. infrastructure capacity (power and site size);
6. impact on quality of life aspects of areas surrounding data centers, such as viewscapes, open and green spaces, accessibility, urban mobility, and social or recreational facilities;
7. emergency-response considerations;
8. potential racial equity and social justice impacts; and
9. any other community benefit or incentives.

The task force must provide an initial report within 6 months after its first meeting, and the final report is due within 12 months after the first meeting. The report must include the recommendation of potential legislative, policy, or zoning changes that the Council should consider. The bill sunsets one year after the final report is presented to the Council. The task force would be staffed by a County Council staff member for support and planning purposes.

This packet contains:

Bill 4-26

Circle #

1

Bill No. 4-26
Concerning: Buildings – Task Force on
Data Centers – Established
Revised: 1/13/2026 Draft No. 2
Introduced: January 20, 2026
Expires: December 7, 2026
Enacted: _____
Executive: _____
Effective: _____
Sunset Date: _____
Ch. , Laws of Mont. Co.

COUNTY COUNCIL FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

Lead Sponsor: Councilmember Glass

AN ACT to:

- (1) establish a task force to study the potential risks and benefits of data centers in the County;
- (2) require the task force to produce a report that identifies the impacts of data centers and evaluates the feasibility of potential legislative, policy, or zoning changes; and
- (3) generally amend the law regarding data centers in the County.

By adding

Montgomery County Code
Chapter 8, Buildings
Article IX
Sections 8-58, 8-59, 8-60, and 8-61

Boldface	<i>Heading or defined term.</i>
Underlining	<i>Added to existing law by original bill.</i>
[Single boldface brackets]	<i>Deleted from existing law by original bill.</i>
Double underlining	<i>Added by amendment.</i>
[[Double boldface brackets]]	<i>Deleted from existing law or the bill by amendment.</i>
* * *	<i>Existing law unaffected by bill.</i>

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following Act:

1 **Sec 1. Sections 8-58, 8-59, 8-60, and 8-61 of Article IX are added as follows:**

2 **Article IX. Task Force on Data Centers.**

3 **8-58. Statement of purpose.**

4 (a) The purpose of this Article is to:

5 (1) establish a task force on data centers to study and evaluate the
6 potential risks, community benefits, and economic impacts of data
7 centers in the County, including:

8 (A) the energy and space requirements necessary to ensure
9 compatibility with neighboring properties and residents;

10 (B) water usage required for cooling;

11 (C) potential environmental noise impacts; and

12 (D) the economic benefits associated with data center
13 development, including job creation and tax revenue; and

14 (2) recommend any potential changes to laws, ordinances, policies, or
15 procedures.

16 **8-59. Task force on data centers – established and membership.**

17 (a) Definitions. For purposes of this Section, data center has the meaning
18 stated under Section 11-239 of the Tax-General Article of the Maryland
19 Code, as amended.

20 (b) Established. The County Council establishes an advisory task force on
21 data centers to assist the Council and District Council in considering
22 legislation, zoning text amendments, policies, regulations, and potential
23 impacts.

24 (c) Membership. The task force must consist of 15 voting members
25 appointed by the County Council. The task force includes:

26 (1) one representative from the Montgomery County Planning
27 Department;
28 (2) one representative from the Department of Permitting Services;
29 (3) one representative from the Department of Environmental
30 Protection;
31 (4) one representative from the Montgomery County Fire & Rescue
32 Service;
33 (5) one representative from the Montgomery County Economic
34 Development Corporation;
35 (6) one representative from an electric and gas utility;
36 (7) one representative from a water utility company;
37 (8) two representatives from a registered civic association;
38 (9) two representatives from an environmental group;
39 (10) two representatives with professional experience in the data center
40 industry; and
41 (11) two representatives from the labor and trade industry.

42 (d) Meetings.

43 (1) The task force must hold monthly meetings.
44 (2) The members of the task force must select a chair at the first
45 meeting.
46 (3) The Council will provide staff support for meetings.
47 (4) Meetings of the task force are subject to the Maryland Open
48 Meetings Act.

49 (e) Compensation. The members of the task force serve without
50 compensation but may receive reimbursement for travel expenses as
51 allowed under law.

52 **8-60. Data center task force – duties and responsibilities.**

53 (a) The task force must conduct a study and prepare a report that includes:

54 (1) a definition of "data center" specific to the County;

55 (2) the potential impact of data centers on existing and future local

56 energy demands and the County taxpayers' ability to meet future

57 energy demands;

58 (3) the potential environmental impact of data centers on air, water,

59 and woodland quality and supply in the County, including

60 recommended measures to mitigate negative impacts;

61 (4) recommendations related to potential locations and policies for the

62 siting of data center uses;

63 (5) infrastructure capacity (power and site size);

64 (6) impact on quality of life aspects of areas surrounding data centers,

65 such as viewscapes, open and green spaces, accessibility, urban

66 mobility, and social or recreational facilities;

67 (7) emergency-response considerations;

68 (8) potential racial equity and social justice impacts; and

69 (9) any other community benefit or incentives.

70 **8-61. Report.**

71 (a) *Interim report.* Within 6 months after the first task force meeting, the task

72 force must provide an interim report to the Council and the District

73 Council that summarizes its progress and findings, including

74 identification of key issues.

75 (b) *Final report.* The task force must submit and present its final report to the

76 Council on or before one year after the first task force meeting, including

77 recommendations for potential amendments to laws, zoning

78 requirements, or regulations, along with the rationale for each
79 recommendation.

80 **Sec 2. Sunset clause.** This Act must expire one year after the task force presents
81 its final report to the Council, with no further force or effect of law.