



**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

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**M E M O R A N D U M**

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 views, 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

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Lead Sponsor: Councilmember Glass

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**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

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

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

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

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

(a) The purpose of this Article is to:

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

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

(B) water usage required for cooling;

(C) potential environmental noise impacts; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

- (1) one representative from the Montgomery County Planning Department;
- (2) one representative from the Department of Permitting Services;
- (3) one representative from the Department of Environmental Protection;
- (4) one representative from the Montgomery County Fire & Rescue Service;
- (5) one representative from the Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation;
- (6) one representative from an electric and gas utility;
- (7) one representative from a water utility company;
- (8) two representatives from a registered civic association;
- (9) two representatives from an environmental group;
- (10) two representatives with professional experience in the data center industry; and
- (11) two representatives from the labor and trade industry.

(d) Meetings.

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

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

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

- (a) The task force must conduct a study and prepare a report that includes:
- (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 viewsapes, 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.

**8-61. Report.**

- (a) Interim report. Within 6 months after the first task force meeting, the task force must provide an interim report to the Council and the District Council that summarizes its progress and findings, including identification of key issues.
- (b) Final report. The task force must submit and present its final report to the Council on or before one year after the first task force meeting, including 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.