

MEMORANDUM

July 21, 2026

TO: Economic Development Committee

FROM: Ludeen McCartney-Green, Legislative Attorney

SUBJECT: Expedited Bill 19-26, Buildings – Moratorium on Permits for Data Centers - Established

PURPOSE: **Worksession** – to receive a Committee recommendation

Following publication of the July 20, 2026, staff report for Expedited Bill 19-26, Buildings – Moratorium on Permits for Data Centers – Established, Councilmember Glass may propose amendments that require a task force to study the impact of data center development in the County.

The amendment proposes a 16-member advisory board with certain duties and responsibilities, including producing a report that would assess infrastructure impacts, evaluate land use and zoning, study environmental impacts, and analyze economic impacts of a data center. The report will also make recommendations for potential amendments to the County’s law and zoning ordinance. See the full text of the amendment on page ©1.

Councilmember Glass also sponsored Bill 4-26, Buildings – Taskforce on Data Centers – Established¹ to provide similar objective as the proposed amendment.

This packet contains:
Amendment for Expedited Bill 19-26

Circle #
1

¹ Legislative History for Bill 4-26:
<https://apps.montgomerycountymd.gov/cellims/BillDetailsPage?RecordId=2892&fullTextSearch=4-26>

**AMENDMENT
BY
COUNCILMEMBER GLASS**

Bill 19-26, Buildings – Moratorium on Permits for Data Centers – Established

Beginning on page 1 of the original bill and insert 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) 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.

(b) Membership. The task force must consist of 16 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) the Montgomery County Public Health Officer or designee;
- (7) one representative from an electric and gas utility company;
- (8) one representative from a water utility company;
- (9) two County residents of a registered civic association;
- (10) two County residents of an environmental group;
- (11) two representatives with professional experience in the data center industry; and
- (12) two representatives from the labor and trade industry.

(c) 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.

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

49 **8-60. Data center task force – duties and responsibilities.**

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

51 (1) the potential impact of data centers on existing and future local
52 energy demands and the County taxpayers' ability to meet future
53 energy demands;

54 (2) the potential environmental impact of data centers on air, water,
55 noise, and woodland quality and supply in the County, including
56 recommended measures to mitigate negative impacts;

57 (3) recommendations related to potential locations and policies for the
58 siting of data center uses;

59 (4) infrastructure capacity (power and site size);

60 (5) impact on quality of life aspects of areas surrounding data centers,
61 such as viewsapes, open and green spaces, accessibility, urban
62 mobility, and social or recreational facilities;

63 (6) emergency-response considerations;

64 (7) potential racial equity and social justice impact;

65 (8) consideration of recommendations from the data center impact
66 analysis and final report produced by the Maryland Department of
67 Legislative Services;

68 (9) advances in technology and best practices that mitigate any
69 negative impacts to noise, water, air, and energy use, including
70 information about technological advances for using renewable
71 energy and battery storage.

72 (10) climate goals analysis and policy recommendations; including
73 how proposed and projected new data center development in the
74 County will affect the County's adopted climate goals and

75 greenhouse-gas reduction targets and the report must include, at
76 minimum:

77 (A) an evaluation of how projected data center electricity
78 demand will interact with the regional electric grid mix and
79 County-level emissions, and how demand will affect the
80 County's residential ratepayers;

81 (B) an assessment of how data center development would
82 advance or hinder achievement of the County's Climate
83 Action Plan and any binding emissions reduction
84 commitments;

85 (C) recommended policy, regulatory, zoning, and incentive
86 measures designed to ensure data center growth is
87 consistent with the County's climate goals, including
88 consideration of renewable energy procurement or onsite
89 generation requirements, and energy-use reporting and
90 verification; identification of data gaps, modeling
91 assumptions, and recommendations for ongoing County
92 monitoring and reporting requirements; and

93 (11) any other community benefit or incentives.

94 **8-61. Report.**

95 (a) Interim report. Within six months of the first task force meeting, the task
96 force must provide an interim report to the Council and the District
97 Council summarizing its progress and findings, including the
98 identification of key issues.

99 (b) Final report. The task force must submit and present its final report to the
100 Council on or before one year after the first task force meeting, including
101 recommendations for potential amendments to laws, zoning

102 requirements, or regulations, along with the rationale for each
103 recommendation.

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