



# City of Arvada

## City Council Agenda

AUGUST 11, 2026

### Councilmembers:

Lauren Simpson, Mayor  
Randy Moorman, Mayor Pro-Tem  
Shawna Ambrose, District 2  
Sharon Davis, At large  
Bob Fifer, District 4  
Michael P. Griffith, At large  
Rebecka Lovisone, District 3

### Staff Members Usually Present:

Don Wick, City Manager  
Linda Haley, Deputy City Manager  
Allison Scheck, Deputy City Manager  
Rachel Morris, City Attorney  
Jacqueline Rhoades, Director of Infrastructure  
Jessica Garner, Director of Community & Econ. Dev.  
Bryan Archer, Chief Financial Officer  
Gabriella Bommer, Director of Human Resources  
Ryan Stevenson, Director of Vibrant Community & Neighborhoods  
Rachael Kuroiwa, Director of Communications & Engagement  
Ed Brady, Chief of Police  
Kristen Rush, City Clerk

Info: 720-898-7550

### THIRD FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM

The study session can only be watched via Zoom

<https://arvadaco-gov.zoom.us/j/89475850775?pwd=84m1LiQXxLFnKPPpF9bJ4fWRKglTxN.1>

4:00 PM

### STUDY SESSION

### THIRD FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM

4:00 P.M.

1. Call to Order/Roll Call of Councilmembers
2. Study Session Topics
  - A. City Council Discussion on Possible Data Center Moratorium
3. Adjournment



## REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION

AGENDA ITEM  
2.A.

TO: THE HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL

DATE: August 11, 2026

SUBJECT: City Council Discussion on Possible Data Center Moratorium

### **Report in Brief**

The rapid expansion of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has prompted many jurisdictions to examine how their existing regulatory frameworks guide data center development. Water availability, energy capacity, and land use are all critical considerations in evaluating the potential impacts of data center development. Several neighboring jurisdictions have recently adopted temporary moratoriums on new data center development while they evaluate the potential impacts on their communities and update their zoning, land-use, and development regulations. The Arvada City Council would like to discuss the possibility of establishing a temporary moratorium in order to provide staff with time to more thoroughly evaluate the resource requirements associated with data center development, including projected water demand, available water supply, energy needs, and land use implications.

### **Background**

The rapid expansion of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has prompted many jurisdictions to examine how their existing regulatory frameworks guide data center development. Water availability, energy capacity, and land use are all critical considerations in evaluating the potential impacts of data center development. Several neighboring jurisdictions have recently adopted temporary moratoriums on new data center development while they evaluate the potential impacts on their communities and update their zoning, land-use, and development regulations.

The Arvada City Council would like to discuss the possibility of establishing a temporary moratorium in order to provide staff with time to more thoroughly evaluate the resource requirements associated with data center development, including projected water demand, available water supply, energy needs, and land use implications.

The study session will provide an opportunity to discuss how the city's current Land Development Code (LDC) currently defines data centers, how data centers are currently zoned and what requirements are in place for the development of a data center. City Council will hear a presentation from staff and will consider options regarding a potential moratorium.

For reference, the city's definition of data centers in the LDC is as follows: A building that is used exclusively for the transmission and exchange of telephone signals; or a facility used by telecommunications carriers, internet access providers, or internet service providers, in which equipment for telecommunications and data processing use (e.g., servers, data storage devices, switches, routers, and other comparable technology infrastructure) is concentrated and physically secured. Equipment in a data center may be owned or operated by more than one entity (Chapter 11, Land Development Code).

### **Strategic Alignment**

This study session aligns with the Quality of Life and Local Economy strategic priorities in the 2024-2030 City Council Strategic Plan.

### **Next Steps**

The city team will follow City Council's direction on whether to consider a public vote to establish a moratorium in the future.

Prepared by:  
Linda Haley, Deputy City Manager

Reviewed by:

Approved by:

Linda Haley, Deputy City Manager 07/28/2026

Rachel Morris, City Attorney 07/28/2026

Don Wick, City Manager 07/29/2026

Enclosure, exhibits & attachments required to support the report

# City Council Study Session – Consideration of Temporary Moratorium on Data Center Facilities

August 11, 2026

# Overview

- Data centers are expanding rapidly nationwide, as well as locally in Colorado.
- Numerous municipalities and counties across Colorado – including Denver, Jefferson County, Longmont, and Larimer County – have adopted data center moratoriums.
- A temporary moratorium on land use applications is a valid exercise of local police power.
- Arvada has valid and well-documented reasons to pursue a moratorium of its own. (i.e. need for comprehensive planning, infrastructure analysis, regulatory development, and a cumulative impact assessment).

# What is a data center?

Data centers are specialized facilities that house and manage computer systems, servers, networking equipment, and storage. Data center types differ in size, function, and associated resource and land use impacts.

# Edge and Micro Data Center

Small-scale facilities located close to end users

- Building size: 500-5,000 sq. feet
- Power demand: .05-1 MW
- Examples: cell towers, hospitals, campuses, industrial facilities



Image shows an example of standalone, prefabricated data center cabinets.

# Enterprise and Internal Data Centers



Image shows the Visa USA campus in Highlands Ranch, Colorado.

Privately operated facilities used by a single organization to support internal computing, storage, and applications

- Building size: 20,000-100,000 sq. feet
- Power demand: 1-10 MW
- Examples: single corporation, university, government agency

# Regional and Colocation Data Centers

- Third-party facilities that provide shared infrastructure and computing space for multiple customers
  - Building size: 50,000-250,000 sq. feet
  - Power demand: 10-50MW
  - Examples: multi-tenant facilities, colocation providers



Image shows a CoreSite data center building in Denver, Colorado.

# Hyperscale Data Centers



Image shows a rendering of the new QTS Aurora-Denver Campus currently under construction.

Large-scale facilities designed to support cloud computing, artificial intelligence, and global internet services

- Building size: 100,000-2 million sq. feet
- Power demand: 75-700+ MW
- Examples: cloud, AI, and global internet platforms

# Data Center Colorado Map

|                  |    |
|------------------|----|
| Denver           | 47 |
| Colorado Springs | 7  |
| Fort Collins     | 2  |
| Loveland         | 2  |
| Walsenburg       | 1  |
| Total            | 60 |

Colorado is primarily a market for smaller data centers, however, hyperscale data centers are being built in Aurora and and planned for Weld County.

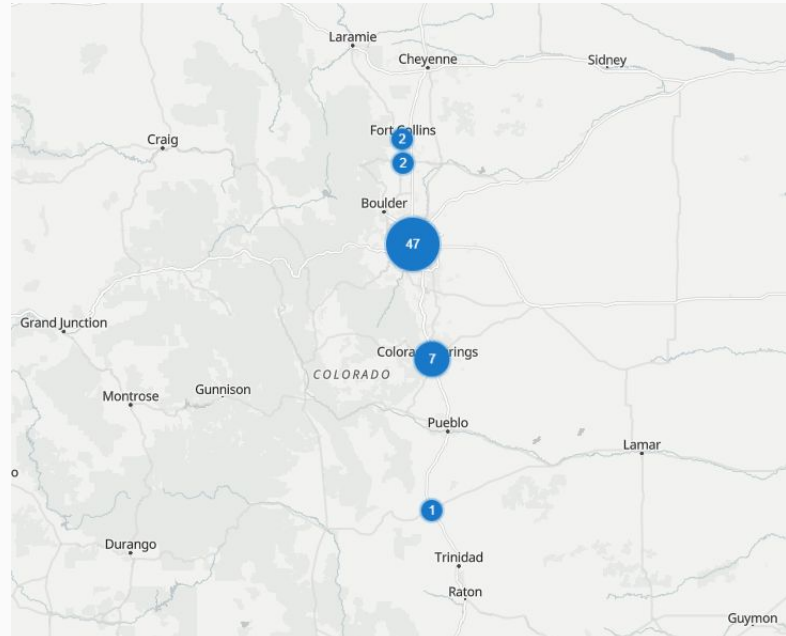


Image provided by [DataCenterMap.com](https://DataCenterMap.com) shows the distribution of data centers across Colorado.

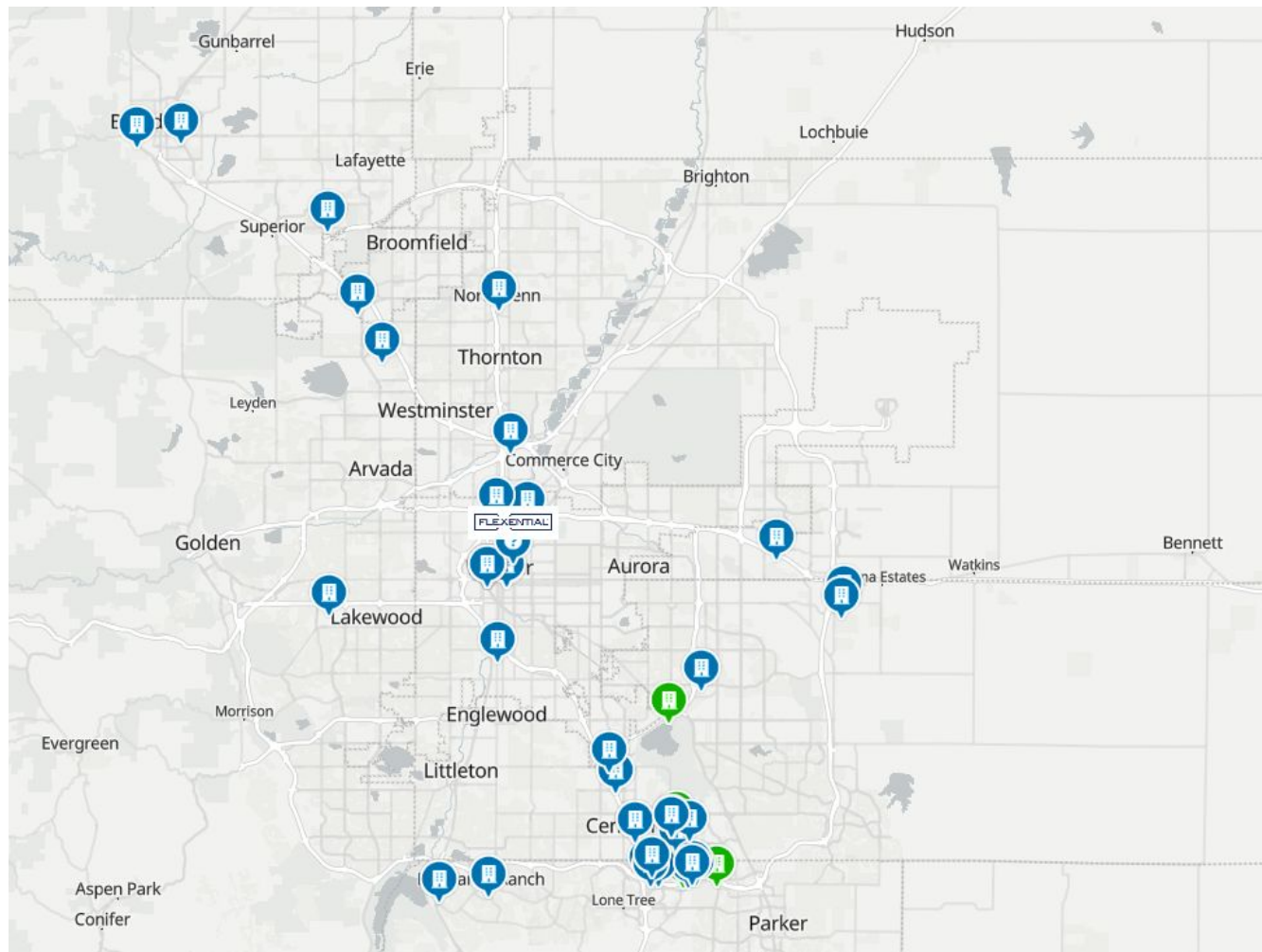


Image provided by [DataCenterMap.com](https://DataCenterMap.com) shows the locations of each data center in the Denver Metro region.

# Who has adopted restrictions?

| City             | Details                                                     |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Denver           | 12 month moratorium, passed in May                          |
| Longmont         | Prohibited hyperscale data centers, passed in June          |
| Broomfield       | 18 month moratorium, 10+ megawatts of power, passed in July |
| Woodland Park    | 18 month moratorium, passed in July                         |
| Town of Lochbuie | 5 year moratorium, passed in July                           |

| County           | Details                                                   |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| Jefferson County | 10 month moratorium, passed in May                        |
| Boulder County   | 6 month moratorium, passed in June                        |
| Larimer County   | 6 month moratorium, passed in January– extended to August |
| Saguache County  | 6 month moratorium, passed in May                         |
| Archuleta County | 6 month moratorium, passed in June                        |

# Why a temporary moratorium?

Here's why municipalities and counties across the state have been enacting data center moratoriums in 2026:

- **State legislature failed to act.** Cities and counties are moving in part because the state legislature failed to act in 2026, letting two competing regulatory bills die and pushing any statewide framework off to at least the 2027 session, leaving local governments to fill the gap on their own.
- **Existing land-use codes don't address data centers.** Staff need time to develop land use regulations that address the specific impacts of these facilities.
- **Electricity costs and grid strain.** Research on rising electricity prices tied to data center power demand and concern about electricity rate increases for ratepayers living near data centers.
- **Water consumption for cooling.** Cities and counties are wary of the large amount of water needed (and associated infrastructure) to cool large-scale data centers, a concern raised repeatedly in local hearings.
- **Noise, nuisance, and general "impact" concerns.** Electrical infrastructure, water consumption, noise and nuisance, environmental impacts, and land-use compatibility.

# Data Centers and Existing Code

## **Definition of a Data Center in Land Development Code (LDC):**

“A building that is used exclusively for the transmission and exchange of telephone signals; or a facility used by telecommunications carriers, internet access providers, or internet service providers, in which equipment for telecommunications and data processing use (e.g., servers, data storage devices, switches, routers, and other comparable technology infrastructure) is concentrated and physically secured. Equipment in a data center may be owned or operated by more than one entity.”

# Data Centers and Existing Code

In Arvada, data centers are classified differently depending on the zoning district. Data centers are considered conditional uses in the Mixed-Use Suburban (MX-S) and Commercial General (CG) zoning districts. As conditional uses, they require approval by City Council following a public hearing.

Data centers are currently considered permitted uses in the Industrial, Light (IL) and Industrial, General (IG) zoning districts. In these districts, approval may be granted administratively by the Community and Economic Development (CED) Director without a public hearing.

# Data Centers and Existing Code

Currently, there are minimal restrictions on data centers.

- Prohibited within 300 feet of a residential zone district boundary.
- Noise limitations, dependent on location and time of day (Section 38-91, Arvada City Code).

# Staff Recommendations

If City Council wants to consider a temporary moratorium:

Staff recommends the adoption of an 18-month moratorium on the acceptance and processing of all new land use applications for data centers. This temporary pause is needed to provide staff with adequate time to research and complete the following:

1. Comprehensive planning
2. Infrastructure analysis
3. Regulatory development
4. Cumulative impact assessment
5. LDC revisions