



Town of Bristol, Rhode Island

Department of Community Development

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September 1, 2026

TO: Planning Board
FROM: Diane M. Williamson, Administrative Officer
RE: **AI Data Centers**

Diane M. Williamson

At the August 19, 2026 Town Council Meeting, the Town Council discussed the need to regulate AI Data Centers in the Zoning Ordinance. The Council passed a motion to refer this to the Planning Board for study and recommendation.

Amy Goins, Asst. Town Solicitor, has addressed this question in other communities and provides a proposed ordinance amendment for the Board's consideration. I have reviewed the proposed ordinance and recommend that you forward this to the Town Council for their consideration. This proposal would prohibit AI Date Centers in all zoning districts.

These types of land uses are new and while they may bring benefits from tax revenues there are also environmental and quality of life concerns around these uses. As you know, we intend to do more research on this topic in the future, and at that time the zoning can be amended if needed.