

Winnebago County Planning and Zoning Department

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING PLANNING AND ZONING COMMITTEE July 28, 2026

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

The applicant(s) listed below has requested a Text Amendment which is regulated by the Town/County Zoning Code, Chapter 23. You are receiving this notification because this application or petition for action: 1. affects area in the immediate vicinity of property which you own; 2. requires your agency to be notified; 3. requires your Town to be notified; or 4. requires you, as the applicant, to be notified.

The Winnebago County Planning and Zoning Committee will be holding a public hearing on July 28, 2026 at 6:30 PM at the JP Coughlin Center, Room A & B, 625 E County Y, Oshkosh, WI.

All interested persons wishing to be heard at the public hearing may appear in person or via Microsoft Teams using the information below. A direct link to the Microsoft Teams Meeting is available on the Winnebago County Meetings and Agenda calendar on the above indicated date.

Microsoft Teams Meeting Information Link: <https://winnebagocowi.portal.civicclerk.com/>
Select the Agenda PDF on the meeting date and Click "Join Meeting Now"

For further detailed information concerning this notice, contact the Town Clerk or the Winnebago County Zoning office, where the application is available for viewing.

INFORMATION ON TEXT AMENDMENT REQUEST

Application No.: 26-TA-003

Applicant: WINNEBAGO COUNTY PLANNING AND ZONING DEPARTMENT

Agent: CARY ROWE, ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

Location of Premises: N/A

Tax Parcel No.: N/A

Explanation: Create and add Section 23.8-53 to Chapter 23, Winnebago County Town County Zoning Codes of the Winnebago County General Code;
To amend Chapter 23.3-2 to establish a data center definition; and
To impose a 12-month Moratorium on the receipt, processing, and approval of new Data Center Zoning Applications.

Definitions/Sections to be added to Chapter 23:

23.8-53 Moratorium.

(1) For the purposes of this 23.8-53, "data center" is defined as a facility of at least 10,000 square feet of floor space built to support high-volume data management, processing, networking, storage, and transmission of digital information and applications. It includes hosting digital data, cloud computing services, artificial intelligence operations, telecommunications infrastructure, or similar technology functions including but not limited to associated support facilities.

(2) Pursuant to Wis. Stats. § 59.69(4), Winnebago County enacts the following moratorium: Notwithstanding any other provision in Chapter 23, there shall be a moratorium on the receipt, processing, and approval of new data center development applications. The purpose of this moratorium is to allow Winnebago County time to evaluate potential health, safety, and environmental impacts, and develop recommendations regarding infrastructure requirements, operational standards, and future regulations. The moratorium shall be in effect for a period of twelve (12) months from the date of publication or until it is rescinded, whichever is earlier. The moratorium enacted herein is not intended to be, and does not constitute, a "development moratorium" as that term is defined in Wis. Stats. § 7966.1002(1)(b).

15.06A Data Center - A facility of at least 10,000 square feet of floor space built to support high-volume data management, processing, networking, storage, and transmission of digital information and applications. It includes hosting digital data, cloud computing services, artificial intelligence operations, telecommunications infrastructure, or similar technology functions including but not limited to associated support facilities. It is not similar to any other land use listed in Exhibit 8-1.

1
2
3 **ORDINANCE: Amend Chapter 23 of the Winnebago County General Code to Impose a 12-**
4 **month Moratorium on the Receipt, Processing, and Approval of New Data Center Zoning**
5 **Applications and Establish Data Center Definition.**
6

7 **TO THE WINNEBAGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**
8

9 **WHEREAS**, pursuant to Wis. Stats. § 59.69(4), Winnebago County possesses authority to exercise
10 powers necessary for the health, safety, and welfare of its residents; and
11

12 **WHEREAS**, Wis. Stats. § 59.69 authorizes counties to adopt and amend zoning regulations governing
13 the use of land and structures within their jurisdiction in order to promote public health, safety, prosperity,
14 aesthetics, and the general welfare and to encourage the most appropriate use of land throughout the
15 county; and
16

17 **WHEREAS**, Wis. Stats. § 59.69(4) authorizes counties to enact temporary moratoria for a limited period
18 of time in order to address the issue giving rise to the need for the moratorium; and
19

20 **WHEREAS**, Winnebago County recognizes that large-scale data centers represent a rapidly emerging
21 category of development associated with cloud computing, artificial intelligence, digital storage,
22 telecommunications infrastructure, and related technologies; and
23

24 **WHEREAS**, modern data center developments may require significant electrical infrastructure, backup
25 generation systems, telecommunications facilities, transportation improvements, land area, emergency
26 response planning, and water resources depending upon facility design and operational requirements;
27 and
28

29 **WHEREAS**, Winnebago County's zoning ordinances do not currently contain regulations specifically
30 addressing the siting, development, operation, expansion, infrastructure impacts, environmental
31 considerations, or compatibility standards associated with large-scale data center development; and
32

33 **WHEREAS**, there are some Towns subject to the zoning jurisdiction of Winnebago County pursuant to
34 Winnebago County General Code Chapter 23; and
35

36 **WHEREAS**, the Winnebago County Board of Supervisors finds that additional study is necessary to
37 evaluate the potential impacts of data center development on land use patterns, agricultural preservation,
38 utility infrastructure, transportation systems, environmental resources, emergency services, economic
39 development objectives, and neighboring property owners; and
40

41 **WHEREAS**, the Winnebago County Board of Supervisors further finds that acceptance of applications for
42 large-scale data center development prior to completion of such study could impair Winnebago County's
43 ability to establish a comprehensive and predictable regulatory framework governing future proposals;
44 and
45

46 **WHEREAS**, local governments throughout Wisconsin have recently considered or adopted temporary
47 data center moratoria or development pauses to provide time for research, public engagement, and
48 ordinance development, including Dane County, Manitowoc County, and the City of Madison; and
49

50 **WHEREAS**, the Winnebago County Board of Supervisors finds that a temporary pause on the
51 acceptance and processing of new data center development applications will provide the opportunity
52 necessary to conduct research, engage stakeholders, evaluate infrastructure impacts, and develop
53 recommendations regarding future zoning and land use regulations; and
54

55 **WHEREAS**, the Winnebago County Board of Supervisors further finds that such action is intended to
56 preserve the County's planning authority while standards are developed; it is not intended to permanently
57 prohibit data center development within Winnebago County; and

58
59 **WHEREAS**, establishing a definition for data centers will eliminate ambiguity.
60

61 **NOW, THEREFORE, THE WINNEBAGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS DOES ORDAIN** that
62 Winnebago County General Code Chapter 23, Article 8, Division 3, covering "Allowable Land Uses", is
63 amended to add the following subdivision:
64

65 **23.8-53 Moratorium.**

66 (1) For the purposes of this 23.8-53, "data center" is defined as a facility of at least 10,000 square feet
67 of floor space built to support high-volume data management, processing, networking, storage, and
68 transmission of digital information and applications. It includes hosting digital data, cloud computing
69 services, artificial intelligence operations, telecommunications infrastructure, or similar technology
70 functions including but not limited to associated support facilities.

71 (2) Pursuant to Wis. Stats. § 59.69(4), Winnebago County enacts the following moratorium:
72 Notwithstanding any other provision in Chapter 23, there shall be a moratorium on the receipt,
73 processing, and approval of new data center development applications. The purpose of this moratorium
74 is to allow Winnebago County time to evaluate potential health, safety, and environmental impacts, and
75 develop recommendations regarding infrastructure requirements, operational standards, and future
76 regulations. The moratorium shall be in effect for a period of twelve (12) months from the date of
77 publication or until it is rescinded, whichever is earlier. The moratorium enacted herein is not intended to
78 be, and does not constitute, a "development moratorium" as that term is defined in Wis. Stats. §
79 66.1002(1)(b).
80

81 **BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED** that the Winnebago County General Code Chapter 23, Article 3, Division 2
82 "Land Use Definitions" is amended to add the following:
83

84 15.06A **Data Center** A facility of at least 10,000 square feet of floor space built to support high-volume
85 data management, processing, networking, storage, and transmission of digital information and
86 applications. It includes hosting digital data, cloud computing services, artificial intelligence operations,
87 telecommunications infrastructure, or similar technology functions including but not limited to associated
88 support facilities. It is not similar to any other land use listed in Exhibit 8-1.
89

90 **BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED** that this Ordinance shall not apply to:

- 91 i. Existing lawfully established data center facilities;
92 ii. Routine maintenance, repair, replacement, or upgrades to existing facilities;
93 iii. Projects that have received all necessary County approvals prior to the effective date of this
94 Ordinance;
95 iv. Telecommunications facilities otherwise regulated under state or federal law.
96

97 **BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED** that during the moratorium period, County staff shall:

- 98 a. Review existing County ordinances and comprehensive planning documents;
99 b. Evaluate potential impacts of large-scale data center development on utility infrastructure,
100 transportation systems, emergency services, land use patterns, agricultural resources, environmental
101 resources, and neighboring property owners;
102 c. Consult with municipalities, utilities, regional planning organizations, economic development entities,
103 industry representatives, property owners, and members of the public;
104 d. Develop recommendations regarding definitions, zoning classifications, siting criteria, performance
105 standards, buffering requirements, infrastructure requirements, environmental protections, and
106 operational standards applicable to future data center development; and
107 e. Prepare a report and recommended ordinance amendments for consideration by the Planning and
108 Zoning Committee and County Board.
109

110 **BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED** that the Winnebago County Board of Supervisors declares that the
111 purpose of this temporary moratorium is to facilitate informed planning and development of land use
112 regulations and that nothing contained herein shall be interpreted as a determination that data center
113 development is either appropriate or inappropriate within Winnebago County.
114

115 **BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED** that this ordinance shall be effective for a period of twelve (12) months

116 upon adoption and the date of publication or until it is rescinded, whichever is earlier.
117

Respectfully submitted by:
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMITTEE
Committee Vote: 5-0

118

Fiscal Note:

Vote Required for Passage: **MAJORITY OF MEMBERS PRESENT**

119

120

121 Approved by the Winnebago County Executive on _____.

122

123

124 _____
Gordon Hintz

125 Winnebago County Executive

126