

MEMORANDUM

TO: Petersburg Borough Assembly
FROM: Petersburg Borough Planning Commission
DATE: September 8, 2026
SUBJECT: Recommendation for a Temporary Moratorium on Data Center Applications in Service Area 1

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Commission recommends that the Assembly adopt an ordinance establishing a temporary moratorium on the acceptance and processing of land use applications and building permits for data centers within Service Area 1, so that review standards specific to this use can be developed. The moratorium would run for one year from its effective date, apply only within Service Area 1, and expire automatically unless the Assembly repeals or extends it.

BACKGROUND

The Commission has become aware of increasing interest in data center development in the borough. Title 19 of the Petersburg Municipal Code contains no review standards written for them. Developing those standards is work the Commission is prepared to do, but it takes time the Commission will not have if applications arrive first.

BASIS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- Without standards, review would proceed case by case, producing decisions that are inconsistent with one another and difficult to reverse.
- The proposed moratorium is narrow: temporary, limited in geography to Service Area 1, and limited in scope to a single use. It pauses applications; it does not prohibit the use.
- One year gives the Commission time to study the use, take public comments, and bring the Assembly standards it can apply consistently.

NEXT STEPS

During the moratorium the Commission would study the land use impacts of data centers, take public comments, and return to the Assembly before the moratorium expires with recommended amendments to Title 19 governing the siting, development, and operation of these facilities.

Respectfully submitted,

Chair, Petersburg Borough Planning Commission