



OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL CONSIDERATION REQUEST

TO: Debbie Racca-Sittre, City Clerk
FROM: Councilmember Ric Galvan, District 6
COPIES: Erik Walsh, City Manager; Andy Segovia, City Attorney
SUBJECT: Data Center Response – Planning and Policy Discussion
DATE: 10-29-25

COSA - CITY CLERK
 2025 OCT 29 AM 11:09:58

Issue for Proposed Consideration

After notifying the City Manager of this Council Consideration Request, and with the City Attorney's Office, I respectfully request your support for the inclusion of the following item on the agenda of the earliest available meeting of the Governance Committee.

Data Center Response – Planning and Policy Discussion.

Brief Background

District 6 and the far West Side of San Antonio have become a hub for data centers. While these investments bring economic opportunity and are a core part of our everyday digital lives, they also bring significant challenges for the electric grid, our natural resources, and our residents' quality of life.

In a policy brief from the Houston Advanced Research Center and the University of Houston Energy, the average mid-sized data center uses 300,000 gallons of water a day, roughly the use of a thousand homes. Data centers in Texas will consume 46 billion gallons of water in 2025. By 2030, the number could rise to 399 billion gallons, or about 7% of the total water use in Texas. When quantifying the impacts of data centers, large loads like these could increase electricity demand by up to 360% by 2035, potentially leading to an electricity shortage.¹

It has become clear that the growth of data centers has outpaced policy discussion and development in San Antonio. Beyond that, there are a number of questions that the people of San Antonio deserve answers to:

- How resource-intensive are the data centers in San Antonio?
- How will the growth of data centers in San Antonio impact our natural resources?
- What policy tools does San Antonio have to address the growth of data centers?

Without proactive planning, unchecked data center expansions could put a strain on San Antonio's resources.

¹ Micalah Spennath, *Powering Texas' Digital Economy: Data Centers and the Future of the Grid* (Houston, TX: Houston Advanced Research Center, n.d.), accessed October 15, 2025, <https://harcresearch.org/research/powering-texas-digital-economy-data-centers-and-the-future-of-the-grid/>.



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Request

Directions to City staff:

- Present to City Council an overview of:
 - The scope of the City's authority to regulate data centers through local ordinances, permitting, or zoning, especially how it pertains to water, power use, and impervious cover.
 - Relevant state laws and site regulations pertaining to data centers, with examples of how other states and cities are responding.
 - The water consumption and planning requirements associated with data center operations here in San Antonio.

- Explore potential amendments to the Unified Development Code that introduce a special use authorization for regulating the location and development of data centers, along with strategies to mitigate impacts such as noise pollution and water and energy use.


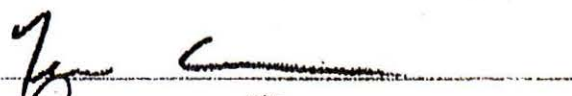
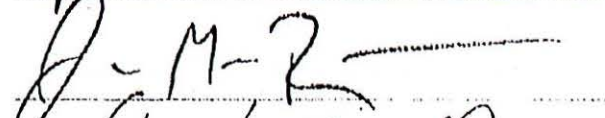
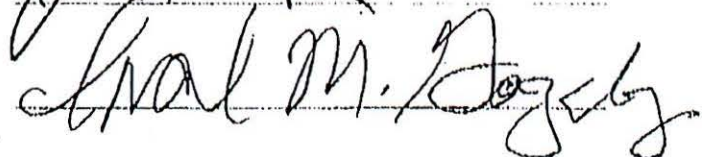
- Explore partnerships with local research institutions, data center entities, municipal utilities, and state entities to better understand and track data center resource needs for growth.

Submitted for Council consideration by: 

Councilmember Rio Galvan, Council District 6

Supporting Councilmembers' Signatures (exactly 4)

District

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