

Testimony on ZTA 26-01 Data Center Commercial Uses - Data Center

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Carolyn Jackson

It appears that no one has done a cost-benefit analysis of whether the county will really reap any rewards from hosting data centers. Residents are aware of other areas where data centers have caused noise, utilized outsize amounts of fresh water, and raised the price of electricity because of their huge electric usage. The cluster of data centers in Dickerson got pre-approval without a site plan. Without hard numbers on both sides of the ledger, how do we know if data centers are good for the county? They are certainly NOT long-term large employers--they simply goose employment over the short term because of construction, but then they are mostly "takers" of services, water and electric.

There is a huge push to build centers because private equity is available and data center builders can get financing. It is an ephemeral "gold rush" to nowhere. These centers should power themselves with solar or nuclear power. They should have detailed engineering plans to recycle water, etc etc. Take a prudent time out to get some answers and build strong policies that make data centers work for all of us.

Thank You,

Carolyn Jackson