

Data Center ZTA Testimony
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I am Link Hoewing speaking on my own behalf. I worked for almost 30 years in the tech industry and have been in data centers many times, although admittedly a decade back before I retired.

We all need and use modern Internet and communications technologies extensively in our everyday lives. Industries that are vital to our county's growth do as well, including farms that use communications and Internet technology for everything from GPS guided planting to managing farming operations.

Data centers do have potentially significant impacts on the environment and on power demand. During the construction phase they can put pressure on local transportation infrastructure and emergency services. They also generate significant tax revenues.

How do we take advantage of the potential benefits of data centers while mitigating or offsetting their potential harms? I would propose three ideas.

Impact or Community Contributions Fees or Taxes

Requiring a data center to pay a "community impact fee" to address local infrastructure strain and bolster the local community with other investments and improvements in local facilities is valid. This is especially appropriate since our area has suffered a lot from the county locating various "unattractive" facilities away from populated centers, the most egregious example being the incinerator. While lots of tax revenue will be generated by data centers, we have also seen for years how the taxes from our area have seldom been returned equitably in the form of investments in needed facilities, programming and services. One estimate is that approximately \$39 million each year in county property taxes alone goes into county coffers just from the five zip codes in the Ag Reserve. This idea could help redress this inequity.

Mandating "Best in Class" Technologies and Ongoing Enhancements

In the tech sector, technologies advance rapidly. This is true of cooling technologies for data centers for example, which now use less water than in the past. To ensure data centers continue to become ever more efficient and less polluting, some jurisdictions negotiate mandates requiring "Best in Class" or "most advanced" technologies for cooling and backup power among other things. This does not just cover the initial installation but applies over time as technology advances. To help make this process work, the county IT Office should develop an annual report about trends in industry and new technologies that

should be considered. Data center companies should also explain why they are not adopting new technologies and how they plan to do so in the future.

Mandates for the Environmentally Safe Disposal of Dated Technology

The rapid advancement of technology requires frequent hardware upgrades, leading to large amounts of electronic waste which, if not properly disposed of, contributes to environmental pollution. A plan for the proper disposal of outdated technology waste should be approved for the data center, updated each year, and monitored closely.