Data Center Overlay
Frequently Asked Questions

1. **How many data centers have been built in the County?**

   As of April 19, 2022, and based on the most recent information from Economic Development, Prince William County has 33 existing data centers that make up 5,491,575 square feet and are built on approximately 523 acres. There are also 13 data centers currently under construction.

2. **What is the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District?**

   On May 17, 2016, the Board of County Supervisors adopted the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District. The Overlay was created for the purpose of promoting development of data centers within areas of the County where there is existing infrastructure that could adequately support the proposed use.

3. **How many existing data centers are located within the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District (Data Center Overlay)?**

   Of the 33 existing data centers in Prince William County, 29 data centers are located within the Data Center Overlay and account for approximately 4,943,698 square feet built on approximately 459 acres.

4. **What percentage of the County's industrially zoned land is also located in the Data Center Overlay?**

   Approximately 72% of the County's industrially zoned land is also located within the Data Center Overlay.

Zone	Total Countywide Acreage	Acreage In Overlay	Percent of the zone located within the Data Center Overlay
M/T	524	524	100%
M-1	4,834	3,349	69%
M-2	2,725	1,940	71%
Total	8,083	5,813	72%

5. **If data centers are the most profitable use of the Data Center Overlay, then why are other uses allowed to be built in the Overlay. Doesn't allowing other uses in the Overlay create an issue where there is not enough room for the data centers?**

   An overlay is not a primary zoning district. There are no single-use districts in the County's Zoning Ordinance. The Data Center Overlay does not prohibit non-data center uses. The Overlay was adopted in 2016 in an area primarily zoned to allow a full variety of commercial and industrial uses. Approximately 72 percent of the industrially zoned property in the entire County is also located within the Data Center Overlay. Overlay districts provided for special regulations on top of underlying zoning districts. The Overlay is approximately 9,500 acres and includes special processes and enhanced regulations for data centers within the overlay district.

6. **Does the revenue from the taxes on data center equipment go into the General Fund?**

   The Office of Management and Budget responded to this question on February 28, 2022, and stated that yes, it does, and the revenue is shared with Prince William County Schools as part of general revenue. The taxes collected are a component of personal property tax revenue. For additional budget related questions please see: https://www.pwcva.gov/department/management-and-budget/budget-question_answers.

7. **How much of the County's tax revenues come from data centers?**

   Please see the attachment that details Data Center Tax Revenues from tax year 2012 (FY2013) to tax year 2021 (FY2022) that was provided by the Office of Management and Budget: HERE. For additional budget related questions please see: https://www.pwcva.gov/department/management-and-budget/budget-question_answers.

8. **Why is increasing the commercial tax base important?**

   Increasing the overall commercial tax base is important to a community because it relieves the tax burden on the residential community and provides for additional tax revenue to fund community services such as schools, parks, and libraries.

9. **What is a "targeted industry"?**

   The Prince William Board of County Supervisors (BOCS) adopted, as part of its Strategic Plan, a list of targeted industries for its economic development efforts. These targeted industries reflect the investment and employment goals of the County's economic development program and the Department of Economic Development uses these targeted industries to develop specific marketing efforts and incentive programs to assist companies. This list of targeted industries was developed in 1995 and amended in 1999, 2014 and 2019, as the County's marketing initiatives reflect the changing economy of the Northern Virginia and Metropolitan Washington area and emerging new technologies. Currently, target industries include: Information Communication Technology (includes data centers), Life Sciences, Medical Networks, Federal Government Contracting, Corporate Facilities, Logistics & Supply Chain, Advanced Manufacturing, Destination & Tourism projects, Retail Reuse, Redevelopment & Opportunity Zone projects.

10. How many rezonings for data center projects have been requested outside of the Data Center Overlay?

Since the creation of the Data Center Overlay in 2016, the following rezoning and special use permit applications have sought approval for data centers outside of the overlay. *The below list only includes applications accepted for review as of the March 24, 2022.*

Status	Case Name	Case Number	Site Acreage	Approx. Maximum Gross Floor Area (Square Feet)	Gross Floor Area Per Acre	Floor Area Ratio (FAR)
Board Approved (11/26/2019)	Youth for Tomorrow	REZ2019-00034	77 (limited to Land bay 2)	637,282	8,276	0.18
Board Approved (12/10/2019)	Gainesville Crossing	REZ2018-00008	129.7 (limited to Land bay B, C-1, C-2)	3,000,000	23,130	0.53
Board Approved (6/15/2021)	Village Place Technology Park	REZ2020-00024	45.46	1,188,143	26,136	0.60
Board Approved (9/7/2021)	Hunter Property*	REZ2020-00022 DPA2021-00014	109.2	4,756,752	43,560	1.0
Board Approved (12/7/21)	I-66 & Route 29 Technology Park	REZ2021-00001 SUP2021-00002	102.38	2,957,680	28,889	0.66
SUBTOTAL/AVERAGE APPROVED			**463.74**	**12,539,857**	**27,040**	**0.62**
Pending	John Marshall Commons Technology Park	REZ2021-00003 SUP2021-00004	22.72	494,842	21,780	0.5
Pending	Compton Property	REZ2021-00019 SUP2021-00030	77.916	1,697,010	21,780	0.5
Pending	Potomac Technology Park	REZ2022-00015 SUP2022-00016	51.67	1,160,000 (based on TIA)	22,450	0.51
SUBTOTAL PENDING			**152.306**	**3,351,852**	**22,003**	**0.503**

The Hunter Property was partially located within the Data Center Overlay when it was initially submitted. Companion to the rezoning request, the overlay was amended to add 109.2 acres and include the entire 196.28-acre property. The additional 109.2 acres entitled an additional 1.0 floor area ratio of data centers or up to 4,756,752 additional square feet.

11. How many changes to the Comprehensive Plan have been requested outside of the Data Center Overlay to accommodate data centers?

Since the creation of the Data Center Overlay in 2016, the following requests have been made by applicants to change their Comprehensive Plan long-range land use designations outside of the Data Center Overlay to support future data center development. *The below list includes only applications accepted for review as of the March 24, 2022.*

Status	Request Type	Project Name	Case Number or Main GPIN	Acreage of Requested Land Use Change
Board Approved (9/7/2021)	Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA)	Hunter Property	CPA2020-00011	44.04
Pending	Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA)	PW Digital Gateway	CPA2021-00004	2,132.7 (entire study area)
Pending	Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA)	Compton Property	CPA2021-00005	77.916
Pending	Land Use Change Requested during the Comp Plan Update	House Family Data Center	7395-91-4884	276.98
Pending	Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA)	Devlin Technology Park	CPA2022-00015	269.85

12. Where can I find more information about a filed application?

For more information about applications under review by the Planning Office, please visit the following link: Development Application Processing Schedule (DAPS) and Pending Planning Cases Interactive Map (pwcva.gov).

13. Besides the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District Comprehensive Review, what studies are currently in progress by the County related to the data center industry?

- A targeted industry land use study is currently being conducted by a consultant to identify how much land is needed for targeted industries throughout the County over the next 20 years. Data centers are one of the targeted industries being studied. For more information see Question 24.

- A data center fiscal impact analysis is currently being conducted by a consultant and our Finance Department. As a part of that analysis the consultant will be providing an average real and personal property tax revenue generated, net of costs to government, for a typical 250,000 square foot data center.

14. Where can I find more information about the PW Digital Gateway project for amending the Comprehensive Plan along Pageland Lane to allow data center uses?

Comprehensive Plan Amendment #CPA2021-00004, PW Digital Gateway, has its own project webpage, which can be found here: pwcva.gov/department/planning-office/pw-digital-gateway. The project also has its own Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document located on the project page.

PW Digital Gateway is a request to create a technology corridor along Pageland Lane for the development of

data center uses. On July 20, 2021, through Res. No. 21-445, the Prince William Board of County Supervisors initiated an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan for PW Digital Gateway to change the Long Range Land Use from AE, Agricultural or Estate and ER, Environmental Resource to Technology / Flex (T/F) with a T-3 Transect to include related impacts on supporting infrastructure and consider alternative comparable land use designation options that meet the needs of the Applicant and the priorities of the Prince WIlliam Board of County Supervisors. Additionally, the Prince William Board of County Supervisors approved an expanded study area, to include the entire corridor between Route 29 and Sudley Road in order to review in a holistic manner (traffic, land use, and environmental concerns), and directed staff to look carefully at the areas directly abutting Conway Robinson Memorial State Forest and the Manassas National Battlefield Park, and coordinate the review with the open space corridor concepts of the rural area (native plant buffering and sustainability) to preserve as much of the area as possible.

The Applicant has proposed to limit new development to only data centers.

15. **What is the status of the County's water study?**
Separately from the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District Comprehensive Review, the Board of County Supervisors directed County staff to evaluate the need for a study to determine the potential impact of land use and impervious area changes on groundwater. The Public Works Director responded to this directive with a memo to the Board. As stated in the memo dated November 22, 2021, from the Director of Public Works, the Virginia Department of Health has not reported any concerns regarding wells going dry or water quality in groundwater aquifers in the County. According to the Prince William County Service Authority, sufficient public water supply is available to serve the County's population to at least 2040. The memo also indicated the cost of a study.

At the time of this writing, the Board has not initiated nor funded a groundwater study. A link to a memo provided to the Board of County Supervisors on this topic is provided on the project page and HERE.

A study on groundwater is outside of the scope of the Data Center Overlay Comprehensive Review; however, if additional information becomes available on a water study, links to available information will be provided.

16. **I have concerns about the impacts of new development on the Occoquan Watershed and the Occoquan Reservoir? What is the County doing to protect the Occoquan Reservoir?**
Separately from the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District Comprehensive Review, on November 17, 2020, the Board of County Supervisors issued Directive No. 20-86 for staff to develop, with public input and direction, a protection overlay district for the Occoquan Reservoir to be included in our County Zoning Ordinance. A link to a memo provided to the Board of County Supervisors on this topic is provided HERE.

As stated in the memo dated November 22, 2021, from the Director of Public Works, the County will be updating its Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area regulations, based on the recent changes in the State regulations. Additionally, the County will be receiving a new updated MS-4 Permit in June 2022 that will further strengthen the County's stormwater management standards. Considering these forthcoming changes in stormwater standards, staff recommends that the County focus on actively engaging with all stakeholders in addressing salinity as a region. The County staff will continue to actively participate with technical experts in addressing these challenges to understand and implement cost effective measures. Staff does not

recommend an overlay district to address salinity, the specific pollutant of concern for the reservoir, at this time.

17. **What is a data center?**

The Prince William County Zoning Ordinance defines data center as a use involving a building or premise in which the majority of the use is occupied by computers and/or telecommunications and related equipment, including supporting equipment, where information is processed, transferred and/or stored.

The exponential increase of digital communication and services, demand for storing, managing, and distributing large amounts of data and information is reflected in the growth of data centers. Commercial users, such as retail and eCommerce companies, increasingly rely on the internet to provide their services and to store data. Data centers are a key resource for digital communications and services. Data Centers are centralized repositories of computer servers that provide these electronic services.

18. **Where are data centers permitted in Prince William County?**

Data centers are a permitted use in a number of zoning districts in Prince William County. Within the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District, data centers are permitted by right in office and industrial districts [in the O(L), O(H), O(M), O(F), M-1, M-2, and M/T zoning districts] and in designated office or industrial land bays in the PBD and PMD district. Outside of the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District, data centers are permitted subject to special use permit approval in commercial, office, industrial districts, and mixed-use districts. Data centers are prohibited in agricultural, residential, PMR, B-2, B-3, and V districts. More information on the data center opportunity overlay district requirements in the Zoning Ordinance may be found by clicking HERE.

19. **How can data centers be considered outside of the Data Center Overlay District?**

Data centers are not prohibited outside of the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District. Outside of the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District, data centers are permitted subject to special use permit approval in commercial, office, industrial districts, and mixed-use districts.

In order for data centers to be constructed in the areas around Pageland Lane, these sites would first need to be rezoned to a zoning district that would allow data centers. Proffers associated with a rezoning in a planned district (ex. PBD) might also state that data centers are a permitted use without a special use permit, in which case the requirement for a separate special use permit could be superseded. If the site is not added to the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District, and the rezoning does not address the special use permit requirement, then a separate special use permit would also be required to approve data centers on Pageland Lane.

The Planning Office makes recommendations on specific rezoning and special use permit requests based on a proposal's consistency with the County's Land Use Plan in the Comprehensive Plan. The pending Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) request for the PW Digital Gateway study area was submitted to amend the County's land use policies in this area. This CPA is currently being evaluated, and the Planning Office does not have a final recommendation on the CPA. Any future rezoning request for data centers would be evaluated for consistency with the County's Comprehensive Plan.

20. How much land is in the data center opportunity overlay district?
This study is ongoing. At the time the study was initiated by the Board of County Supervisors, the Data Center Opportunity Overlay District included a ±9,523-acre overall land area. Excluding public rights-of-way (i.e. roads), the overlay included ±8,712 acres of individual properties.

21. How much land is left in the data center opportunity overlay district? Is the existing overlay adequate?
In the Board's initiation of this study, the Board directed staff to evaluate whether the existing overlay is adequate. This study is ongoing and a final answer to this question has not been answered.

To address this question from an economic development perspective, the Executive Director of the Department of Economic Development provided a Market Viability Review dated May 27, 2021. Based on the analysis at that time, the memo concluded, as of the date of issuance of the memo, that within the overlay approximately 600-1,110 acres are considered market viable (available to sell to a data center user looking for sites in Prince William County).

22. Why did the Department of Economic Development prepare the DCOZ Economic Viability Map?
In response to a Board member question regarding how much land is available in the DCOZ, the Department of Economic Development performed a preliminary economic development market viability analysis. In the memorandum dated May 27, 2021, the Department concluded that there is limited land within the overlay considered to be "market viable" to new prospects interested in data center sites in the Prince William County. Market Viable is generally defined as vacant, developable properties, over 30 acres, within the overlay, that are potentially for sale to a data center user. Since that memo was released, more land in the data center market has come off the market. Economic Development estimates between 90 and 830 acres remain available. The Department made several assumptions in developing the Market Viability Map. The Department assumed that a prospect could go through an entitlement process for any vacant land that was not already zoned for a by-right data center, as such existing zoning was not a limiting factor. The Department also identified parcels over 30 acres as being the most viable for data center uses based on prospect inquiries for real estate over the past 3 years.

The Department also acknowledges that if time or cost is not a limiting factor for a data center prospect, then parcels less than 30 acres adjacent to each other could be assembled for a data center project.

23. Does the County have a list of all vacant parcels over 30 acres that have existing zoning supportive of data center uses within the Data Center Overlay?

Within the Data Center Overlay, there are 21 vacant parcels that are over 30 acres and would also allow for by right (or entitled) data center development. These parcels make up 1,822 acres. See the table below:

GPIN	GISA CRE	DEED_A CREA	RUR AL	DCOZ OD	LR_USE	CLASS	DATA_CTR	ZONECASE 1	CASENAME	ST_NO	ST_NAME	ST_TYPE	CITY	ZIP
7496-47-2405	253.919	253.921		Y	FEC	M-2	Under Construction	REZ2017-00023	AURA DEVELOPMENT	13001	ROLLINS FORD	RD	BRISTOW	20136
7493-00-8779	201.816	202.900	Y	Y	AE	M-1	-	REZ1968-0006	COMPTON	13300	WARRENTON	RD	CATLETT	20119
7497-61-8568	181.282	181.287		Y	EI	M-1	-	REZ1958-0021	BOCS	6201	WELLINGTON	RD	GAINESVILLE	20155
7393-71-8851	181.229	168.682	Y	Y	AE	M-1	-	REZ1968-0006	COMPTON	12750	BRANCH	ST	CATLETT	20119
7497-43-7316	117.275	117.288		Y	EI	M-1	-	REZ1958-0021	BOCS	13490	UNIVERSITY	BLVD	GAINESVILLE	20155
7493-03-4403	87.382	87.308	Y	Y	AE	M-1	-	REZ1968-0006	COMPTON	12751	CENTER	ST	CATLETT	20119
7496-88-1217	82.998	83.000		Y	FEC	M-2	Pending	REZ2020-00011	GAINESVILLE TECH PARK	8008	DEVLIN	RD	BRISTOW	20136
7695-26-4967	81.717	81.725		Y	TF	PBD	Under Construction	PLN2007-00749	ELI LILLY AT INNOVATION	9650	INNOVATION	DR	MANASSAS	20110
7597-44-7395	62.177	62.129		Y	EI	M-1	-	REZ1969-0021	WHEELER SMITH WOOD SOLITE	7300	CENTURY PARK	DR	MANASSAS	20109
7695-53-7717	61.465	61.465		Y	EI	M-1	Under Construction	REZ2018-00002	BRICKYARD	10000	BRICKYARD	WAY	MANASSAS	20110
7497-41-7199	58.537	58.538		Y	EI	M-1	-	REZ1958-0021	BOCS	5945	WELLINGTON	RD	GAINESVILLE	20155
7497-32-5206	58.535	58.534		Y	EI	M-1	-	REZ1958-0021	BOCS	5845	WELLINGTON	RD	GAINESVILLE	20155
7596-52-6573	54.360	51.206		Y	ER	PBD	-	REZ2020-00010	11951 SUDLEY MANOR DRIVE	11951	SUDLEY MANOR	DR	MANASSAS	20109
7496-68-8840	53.409	53.411		Y	ER	M-2	Pending	REZ2020-00011	GAINESVILLE TECH PARK	8125	PINEY BRANCH	LN	BRISTOW	20136
7595-75-5639	42.401	42.400		Y	TF	PBD	Under Construction	REZ2019-00028	AVANTI AT INNOVATION PROFFER AMENDMENT & REZONING	9650	HORNBAKER	RD	MANASSAS	20109
7597-85-1215	40.547	40.474		Y	FEC	PBD	Under Construction	REZ2019-00025	WESTVIEW 66	11314	BALLS FORD	RD	MANASSAS	20109
7694-84-2446	35.600	35.601		Y	ER	PBD	Under Construction	PLN2002-00025	AIRPORT GATEWAY COMMERCE CENTER II	10940	AIRMAN	AVE	MANASSAS	20112
7695-58-1389	33.029	33.030		Y	TF	M-2	Pending	REZ1980-0030	IBM	9480	GODWIN	DR	MANASSAS	20110
8392-16-5293	32.922	33.183		Y	POSP	M-2	-	REZ1971-0009	ANDERSON	13303	TELEGRAPH	RD	WOODBRIDGE	22192
7595-66-9467	30.812	30.811		Y	TF	PBD	Under Construction	REZ2019-00028	AVANTI AT INNOVATION PROFFER AMENDMENT & REZONING	9530	HORNBAKER	RD	MANASSAS	20109
7695-50-2997	85.397	85.370		Y	FEC	M-2	Under Construction	REZ2018-00001	ASHWOOD ADDITION	10400	HARRY J PARRISH	BLVD	MANASSAS	20110

24. **Is the Department of Economic Development conducting another land needs analysis?**

    The Department of Economic Development has contracted Camoin Associates to prepare a land needs analysis for all Targeted Industries in Prince William County for the next 20 years based on industry projections and past performance. The analysis will estimate aggregate amount of land needed for all of the Targeted Industries and compare that with the Planning Office's Build Out Analysis to identify any gaps for additional land that may be needed to support the growth of these industries and increase the County's overall commercial tax base. This analysis is important as it will help inform the Land Use Chapter update of the Comprehensive Plan as well as the Data Center Overlay Comprehensive Review, and pending Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) requests, including PW Digital Gateway CPA. Camoin's analysis is not bound by any preliminary conclusions made by the Department of Economic Development in its preparation for this broader study about land needed for all Targeted Industries to grow for the next 20 years.

25. **If data centers are approved, who will pay for extension of water and sewer lines?**

    In accordance with the Service Authority's Development Review Process and System Improvement Policy, "growth pays for growth". The applicant/developer, and not the Service Authority's existing customer base, would be responsible for the design and construction of the infrastructure necessary to serve their development through any approved zoning requests. All proposed development projects are reviewed by the Service Authority to determine if the existing water distribution, sewer collection systems, and pump stations are adequate to meet the projected water demands and wastewater flows. Deficiencies will be identified, and the applicant will be notified of their requirements to meet the Service Authority's established performance standards for service. An applicant would be required to pay for the extension of water and sewer lines as a part of the rezoning, development review and construction process.

26. **How much water do data centers use?**

    In a response from the Service Authority in November 2021, they indicated that data center water consumption varies depending on several factors, including but not limited to the size of the facility, the cooling technology used and outdoor temperature. Based on Service Authority records for 25 operational data centers in Prince William County, the average daily water consumption of a single data center building is about 18,000 gallons per day while the maximum day consumption of a single data center building is about 88,000 gallons per day. The amount of water data centers consume also fluctuates based on seasonal weather conditions. Facilities typically use less water during the winter months and more during the summer months. Currently, the combined water consumption of the operational data centers in Prince William County accounts for about 1.5% of the Service Authority's average-day demand and about 3.9% of the Service Authority's maximum-day demand.

27. **What is the plan in the event that data centers become obsolete?**

    In the Board's initiation of this study, the Board directed staff to provide data center industry emerging trends related to the decommissioning of data centers. This study is ongoing, and additional information will be provided as it becomes available, including recommendations. At this time, staff is not aware of prominent examples of decommissioned data centers, because the data center market remains strong. In recent market analysis, data center real estate specialists indicate that the pandemic has had minimal negative effect on the Northern Virginia data center market. The analysis indicates that there has been an acceleration of the data center market because it has caused smaller corporations to shift their workload to the cloud or to a more virtual environment, thereby increasing demand for data centers.