



APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 2, 2017.** Please include this application form with electronic entry.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Prince William County

Program Title: Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District

Program Category: Community & Economic Development

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Name: Christopher E. Martino

Title: County Executive

Signature: 

Virginia Association of Counties

2017 Achievement Award

Locality/Department: Prince William County Planning Office

Program Title: Data Center Opportunity Zone

Program Overview/Summary

Data centers are a fast growing industry in Prince William County and the Northern Virginia Region. The Prince William County Data Center Opportunity Zone was created on May 17, 2016 to accommodate growth of the data center industry in the County by considering infrastructure needs, such as electric utilities, and to mitigate potential conflicts between data centers and their neighbors.

Challenge Addressed

There are three major challenges that have arisen from data center growth in Prince William County; providing the electricity infrastructure to an energy-intensive industry, assigning the appropriate land use type and acreage, since data centers typically require a large development footprint, and mitigating conflicts with potential neighboring residential land uses. The Board of County Supervisors declared its intent to initiate a zoning text amendment to incorporate appropriate zoning requirements for data centers, which would proactively address the infrastructure necessary to support such uses and avoid potential impacts to other properties. The resolution also noted that this amendment should continue the County's efforts to advance commercial and industrial development.

Program Response

Prince William County needed a solution that balanced the desire to expand the commercial tax base and promote economic development opportunities, such as data centers, with the preservation and protection of existing neighborhoods and historic resources. Working with community and industry stakeholders, staff drafted a zoning text amendment that:

- Promoted data center opportunities in appropriate locations;
- Identified, through an overlay district, the areas of the County that had access to existing high voltage electric transmission lines or could be readily served by new lines without crossing existing residential neighborhoods or historic resources; and,
- Permitted expedited entitlement processes for establishing new data centers and substations within the overlay district.

This provided appropriate protections while promoting data center development in a large portion of the County.

Financing and Staffing

Prince William County Planning Office staff took the lead on the project. The proposed zoning text amendment and overlay district were developed in consultation with stakeholders representing community and business perspectives. Staff met with citizens as well as representatives from NAIOP Commercial Real Estate Development Association, Northern Virginia Technology Council, and the Prince William Chamber of Commerce to discuss ideas and to solicit input. The stakeholders considered a variety of alternatives to ensure the appropriate siting of data centers while promoting the County's economic development goals. Substantial analysis using geographic information systems (GIS) was necessary to identify appropriate land with access to electric transmission lines to place in the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District.

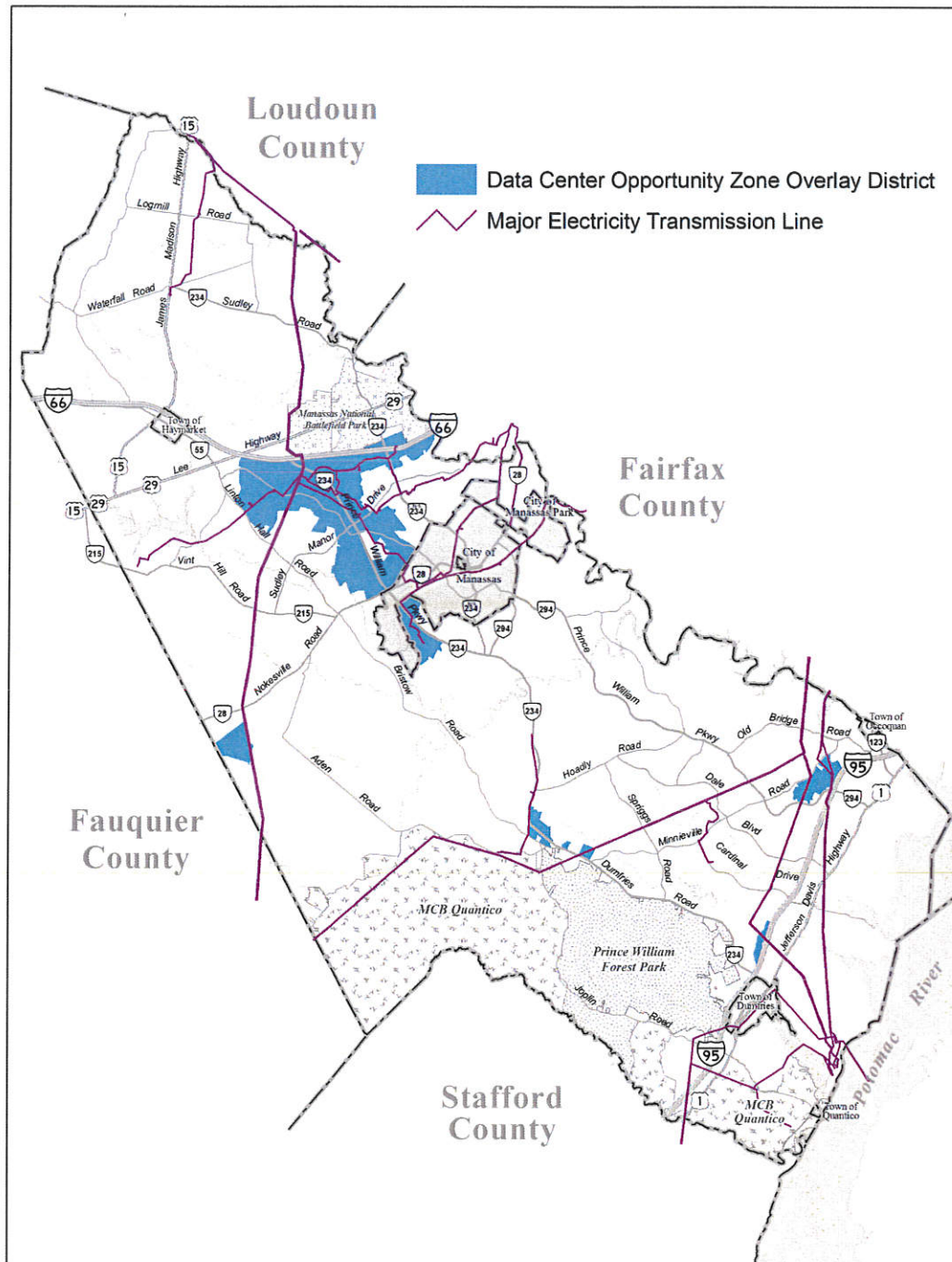
Program Results

The Data Center Opportunity Zone was created to promote data center development within areas of the County where there is existing infrastructure that could adequately support the proposed use. In addition to achieving all of the regulatory goals, Prince William County used this as an opportunity to create an economic development marketing tool for this important targeted industry. By pre-certifying over 10,000 acres of land area as ideal for data center uses, the Opportunity Zone solidified Prince William County as an industry leader and provided a solution that continues the County's efforts to attract and advance high-tech industrial development while protecting neighborhoods and historic resources. Citizens have applauded the site selection criteria limiting the need for new transmission lines through existing neighborhoods and areas with historic resources. Data center developers have benefited from the fast track approval process that has been facilitated through the pre-certification program. The County's Department of Economic Development has successfully integrated this District into their marketing initiatives.

Supporting Documentation

Supporting documentation includes a map of the [Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District](#) and the [zoning text amendment](#) found in the County's Zoning Ordinance. Article on program success: [Prince William County surpasses 3 million square feet of data center space](#), (Nov. 2016)

Map of the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District



Zoning Text Amendment for the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District

ARTICLE I. – TERMS DEFINED

PART 100. - DEFINITIONS

~~*Data and Computer Services* shall mean a use involving a building and premises in which the majority of the space is occupied by computers and/or telecommunications and related equipment and where information is processed, transferred and/or stored. May include data centers, data technology centers, internet service providers, network operations centers, web hosting facilities and other similar establishments primarily engaged in providing direct access through telecommunications networks to computer-held information.~~

Computer and Network Services shall mean a use involving a building/premise in which a majority of the use is occupied by people and staff engaged in activities related to work that is focused on supporting computers and/or telecommunications and related equipment where information is processed, transferred and/or stored. This includes satellite dish facilities, internet service providers, network operations centers and web teleconferencing facilities, but shall not include a Data Center.

Data Center shall mean a use involving a building/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.

Electric Substation shall mean an electrical installation which contains generation or power-conversion equipment and associated electric equipment and parts, such as switchboards, switches, wiring, fuses, circuit breakers, compensators and transformers.

ARTICLE II. - ADMINISTRATION, PUBLIC USES AND USES OF A PUBLIC NATURE, GENERAL STANDARDS FOR PLANNED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS

PART 201. - PUBLIC USES AND USES OF A PUBLIC NATURE

Sec. 32-201.11. - Public facilities permitted in all zoning districts, subject to review in accordance with Code of Virginia, § 15.2-2232.

1. Public facilities, except electric substations, may be located within any zoning district in Prince William County, subject to Code of Virginia, § 15.2-2232 and this chapter.

2. Electric Substations may be located in any zoning district within the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District, subject to the public facility review requirements of the Code of Virginia, § 15.2-2232 and this chapter. Electric substations may be permitted by Special Use Permit within any zoning district outside of the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District.

ARTICLE III. – AGRICULTURAL AND RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

PART 306. – PLANNED DEVELOPMENT – PMR, PLANNED MIXED RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

Sec. 32-306.11. – Secondary uses in residential areas.

1. Neighborhood commercial and office uses shall be permitted as secondary uses at locations designated on the PMR Master Zoning Plan.
2. Secondary office uses except a data center use shall be permitted, by right, as provided in section 32-402.11, as permitted by section 32-402.12 as secondary uses, and as provided by section 32-402.13 by Special Use Permit.

PART 351. – VILLAGE (V) DISTRICT

Sec. 32-351.03. – Uses permitted by right.

9. Computer and network services

10 9. Cultural arts center.

~~10. Data and computer services~~

[Subsequent uses renumbered]

ARTICLE IV. – COMMERCIAL, OFFICE AND INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS

PART 401. – COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

B-1, General Business District

Sec. 32-401.11. – Uses permitted by right

15. Computer and network services

16 ~~15~~. Craft brewery (not to exceed production of 10,000 barrels per year. May or may not be associated with a restaurant).

~~17~~ 46. Cultural arts center.

~~17. Data and computer services~~

[Subsequent uses renumbered]

Sec. 32 – 401.13. – Special Uses

10. Data Center

~~11~~ 40. Donated materials collection center.

[Subsequent uses renumbered]

B-2, Neighborhood Business District

Sec. 32-401.21. – Uses permitted by right

10. Computer and network services

~~11~~ 40. Craft brewery (not to exceed production of 10,000 barrels per year. May or may not be associated with a restaurant).

~~12~~ 41. Cultural arts center.

~~12. Data and computer services~~

[Subsequent uses renumbered]

PART 402. – OFFICE DISTRICTS

O(L), Office Low-Rise District

Sec. 32-402.11. – Uses permitted by right

4. Computer and network services

~~5~~ 4. Cultural arts center.

~~5. Data and computer services~~

6. Data Center within the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District

[Subsequent uses renumbered]

Sec. 32-402.13. – Special uses

4. Data Center outside the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District

[Subsequent uses renumbered]

O(H), Office High-Rise District

Sec. 32-402.21. – Uses permitted by right

4. Computer and network services

5 4. Cultural arts center.

~~5. Data and computer services~~

6. Data Center within the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District

[Subsequent uses renumbered]

Sec. 32-402.23. – Special uses

3. Data Center outside the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District

[Subsequent uses renumbered]

O(M), Office Mid-Rise District

Sec. 32-402.31. – Uses permitted by right

4. Computer and network services

5 4. Cultural arts center.

~~5. Data and computer services~~

6. Data Center within the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District

[Subsequent uses renumbered]

Sec. 32-402.33. – Special uses

3. Data Center outside the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District

[Subsequent uses renumbered]

O(F), Office/Flex District

Sec. 32-402.41. – Uses permitted by right

6. Computer and network services

7 6. Cultural arts center.

~~7. Data and computer services~~

8. Data Center within the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District

[Subsequent uses renumbered]

Sec. 32-402.43. – Special uses

3. Data Center outside the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District.

[Subsequent uses renumbered]

PART 403. – INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS

M-1, Heavy Industrial District

Sec. 32-403.11. – Uses permitted by right

16. Computer and network services.

17 ~~46.~~ Contractor or tradesman's shop (limited), no trash or refuse removal service.

18 ~~47.~~ Contractor or tradesman's shop, no trash or refuse removal service.

~~48. Data and computer services.~~

19. Data Center within the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District

[Subsequent uses renumbered]

Sec. 32-403.13. – Special uses

3. Data Center outside the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District

[Subsequent uses renumbered]

M-2, Light Industrial District

Sec. 32-403.21. – Uses permitted by right

11. Computer and network services.

12 ~~44.~~ Contractor or tradesman's shop (limited), no trash or refuse removal service.

~~42. Data and computer services~~

13. Data Center within the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District

[Subsequent uses renumbered]

Sec. 32-403.23. – Special uses

3. Data Center outside the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District

[Subsequent uses renumbered]

M/T, Industrial/Transportation District

Sec. 32-403.31. – Uses permitted by right

18. Computer and network services.

19 ~~48.~~ Contractor or tradesman's shop (limited); no trash or refuse removal service.

20 ~~49.~~ Contractor or tradesman's shop (unlimited); no trash or refuse removal service.

~~20. Data and computer services.~~

21. Data Center within the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District

[Subsequent uses renumbered]

Sec. 32-403.33. – Special uses

3. Data Center outside the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District

[Subsequent uses renumbered]

ARTICLE V. – OVERLAY DISTRICTS

PART 500. – SPECIAL PUBLIC INTEREST OVERLAY DISTRICTS, GENERALLY

Sec. 32-500.01. – Purpose and intent

The purpose of the Special Public Interest Overlay Districts established in the following sections is to protect and enhance certain specific lands and structures which, by virtue of their type or location, have characteristics which are distinct from lands and structures outside such overlay districts. It is the intent of the Board of County Supervisors to permit, insofar as possible, those uses and structures which would otherwise be permitted, provided that reasonable and necessary conditions are met which insure the protection and enhancement of said lands and structures. It is the further intent of the Board of County Supervisors to specifically protect and enhance the following:

1. Flood hazard areas.
2. Historic areas.
3. Designated highway corridors.
4. Chesapeake Bay preservation areas.
5. Airport safety.
6. Institutes of higher education.
7. Redevelopment.
8. Keeping of domestic fowl.
9. Data center opportunity zone

Part 509. – Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District

Sec. 32-509.01. - Purpose and intent

The Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District 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. This District continues the County's efforts to attract and advance high-tech industrial development while limiting negative impacts to communities.

Sec. 32-509.02. – Establishment of Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District

1. A Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District may be established by the Board of County Supervisors on lands in proximity to high voltage transmission lines of 115kv or more and planned or zoned for office or industrial uses.
2. A Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District shall be created and amended by ordinance upon resolution of the Board of County Supervisors. The boundaries shall be set using a map.
3. Said District shall overlay the existing zoning district. The regulations and requirements of the underlying zoning district and the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District shall both apply, provided however, that when the regulations applicable to the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District conflict with the regulations of an underlying zoning district, the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District regulations shall apply.

Sec. 32-509.03 - Uses permitted by right.

All uses permitted by right in the underlying zoning district shall be permitted in the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District. Data centers shall be permitted by right in the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District 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.

Sec. 32-509.04. - Secondary uses.

All permitted secondary uses in the underlying zoning district shall be permitted in the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District.

Sec. 32-509.05. - Uses permitted by Special Use Permit.

All permitted special uses in the underlying zoning district shall be permitted by special use permit in the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District.

Sec. 32-509.06. – Prohibited Districts

Data centers shall be prohibited in agricultural, residential, PMR, B-2, B-3, and V districts.