

CITY OF BETHLEHEM

Department of Community and Economic Development

Interoffice Memo

TO: Rachel Leon, Council President
FROM: Cathy Fletcher, Director of Planning and Zoning
RE: Zoning Ordinance Amendment: Data Centers

At its August 25, 2026 meeting, the Planning Commission voted 4-0 to recommend approval of the above-referenced Zoning Text Amendment.

The proposal is to establish regulations for Data Centers.

The original transmittal to the Planning Commission is attached for reference.

CC: Mayor Reynolds
Craig Peiffer
Laura Collins
Matthew Deschler

DATE: September 28, 2026

Catherine Fletcher

Cathy Fletcher, AICP
Director of Planning and Zoning

CITY OF BETHLEHEM

Department of Community and Economic Development Interoffice Memo

TO: Planning Commission members
FROM: Cathy Fletcher, Director of Planning and Zoning
RE: Proposed Zoning Text Amendments: Data Centers

Attached is a draft zoning text amendment that amends the City's Zoning Ordinance to establish regulations for Data Centers.

The proposed amendment to Article 1302 adds a definition for "Data Center," which is not currently defined in the Zoning Ordinance.

The proposed amendments to Article 1305 establish the zoning districts in which Data Centers are permitted. Data Centers would not be permitted in the Light Industrial (LI) or Planned Industrial (PI) Districts and would be permitted by Special Exception (SE) in the Industrial (IN) District, including the Industrial Overlay (IN-O) District.

The proposed amendments to Article 1322 establish regulations specific to the Data Center use. These provisions require applicants to submit applicable plans, studies, evaluations, and mitigation strategies at time of application and establish site design standards, including minimum setbacks based on the characteristics of nearby properties, as well as maximum building height, minimum yard, minimum buffer yard, and maximum building coverage requirements.

This item is placed on your August 25th Planning Commission Agenda for review and consideration. Pursuant to the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, the Planning Commission is responsible for reviewing proposed zoning text amendments and providing a recommendation to City Council.

CC: Mayor Reynolds
Craig Peiffer
Laura Collins

DATE: August 19, 2026

Catherine Fletcher

Cathy Fletcher, AICP
Director of Planning and Zoning