

ORDINANCE 26-0703
Creation of Section 4-3-2-7
ENACTING A MORATORIUM ON DATA CENTERS

WHEREAS, Wisconsin law permits Green County to adopt certain zoning ordinances and amend its existing ordinances to ensure planned and orderly land use development, protect property values and ensure that future growth is appropriate for the land's character and adaptability; and

WHEREAS, a "Data Center" is one or more facilities that house computing and networking equipment, along with storage and management systems, to support the storage, processing, retrieval, and distribution of digital data and applications; and

WHEREAS, Data Centers typically feature high-performance servers, storage arrays, networking equipment, cooling systems, and power backup solutions to ensure uninterrupted operation; and

WHEREAS, Green County is aware of interest in establishing, placing or constructing Data Centers in surrounding counties; and

WHEREAS, Towns and the public in Green County are in support of a moratorium relating to Data Centers; and

WHEREAS, there are concerns about potential health and safety issues related to the limited transparency of the construction and operation of Data Centers, including electrical connections, electrical and magnetic fields, impacts on air quality and water resources, water use, electricity demand, and fire hazards; and

WHEREAS, there are concerns that the construction and operation of Data Centers will result in an overburdening of public services and infrastructure in Green County, including electrical and water utilities, town roads, and fire and emergency services; and

WHEREAS, there are concerns about the potential secondary impacts of the construction and operation of Data Centers, including impacts on property values, noise and visual impacts, and impacts on the public health, safety and general welfare of residents, businesses, and visitors; and

WHEREAS, the construction and operation of Data Centers is not consistent with existing county plans and ordinances including the Green County Comprehensive Plan, the Green County Farmland Preservation Plan, and Town comprehensive plans; and

WHEREAS, the Green County Zoning and Land Use Ordinance does not contain specific language addressing the location, construction, and operation of Data Centers; and

WHEREAS, a moratorium would allow Green County to fully explore, analyze, and research the environmental, economic, health, and safety impacts of Data Centers and develop consistent zoning and regulatory standards to be applied to Data Centers in Green County; and

WHEREAS, a moratorium would allow Green County to work with local Towns to fully explore, analyze and research the environmental, economic, health and safety impacts, develop consistent zoning standards and to allow the state or other regulatory agencies to develop regulations governing Data Centers; and

WHEREAS, the Zoning and Land Use Committee conducted a public hearing on July 13, 2026, and after careful consideration and review, recommends that the County Board amend Title 4 of the Green County Code and approve a moratorium;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Green County Board of Supervisors, in legal session assembled, that Title 4, Chapter 3 of the Green County Code be modified as follows:

CHAPTER 3 BUILDING AND LAND USE REGULATIONS

4-3-2: GENERAL PROVISIONS AND EXCEPTIONS

4-3-2-7 MORATORIUM ON DATA CENTERS

1. For the purpose of this Title, "Data Center" means one or more facilities that house computing and networking equipment, along with storage and management systems, to support the storage, processing, retrieval, and distribution of digital data and applications.

2. Pursuant to Section 59.69(4) Wis. Stats., Green County enacts the following moratorium: Notwithstanding any other provision in this Title 4, there shall be a moratorium on the receipt of applications and the granting of all land use and zoning permits, conditional use permits, rezone requests or any other approvals for the placement or construction of Data Centers in Green County. The purpose of the moratorium is to allow Green County time to research the possible environmental, economic, public health, safety, and general welfare effects of Data Centers, duly weigh the extensive input already received from Towns and the public and possibly solicit further such input, and establish consistent zoning and regulatory standards to be applied to Data Centers in Green County and the Green County Land Use and Zoning Committee to conduct hearings and make recommendations to the County Board regarding amendments to this or other county ordinances. The moratorium shall be in effect for a period of 12 months from the date this ordinance is published or until the County Board adopts and approves amendments to this ordinance or rescinds this moratorium, or both. The moratorium enacted in this Title is not intended to be, and does not,

