



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

News Release

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CONTACT: [Vivian Laxton](#)
Communications Director, 301-600-1315

Legislation Introduced to Limit Data Centers



FREDERICK, Md. – Frederick County Executive Jessica Fitzwater and members of the County Council today announced a compromise to limit where data centers can be built to the area around the old East Alcoa property north of Adamstown. The compromise will limit the development to less than 1% of the County’s total land mass, in an area with the infrastructure to support it, and ensure the County Council retains the tools to prevent future sprawl.

“One of the most important questions facing our community is where data centers can be located and, by extension, where they will not be allowed,” Executive Fitzwater said. “This bipartisan compromise ensures we are protecting our environment and quality of life, while acknowledging that Frederick County’s location makes it a logical site for this critical industry. I want to thank the Council members, who have worked with my Administration to create a way forward that we can all support.”

The County Executive will introduce a text amendment to the zoning code to create a tool called an overlay, which will be used to limit data center development. All seven Council members will co-sponsor the measure. The Council will review and vote on the bill through its ordinary public legislative process. After that, the Division of Planning and Permitting will develop a map through an open and transparent public process, which will be presented to the Planning Commission for review and the County Council for approval.

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Here's what others are saying:

Council President Brad Young (at-large): "I'm excited to support this commonsense approach to data center siting. We heard loud and clear from the public about the need for limits on where these facilities can be built. This solution addresses those concerns effectively—without relying on floating zones."

Council Member Steve McKay (District 2): "I am very pleased to support this compromise approach to where the County plans for data center growth. I have pushed for the floating zone because I wanted to ensure that the Council maintains a firm hand on where we allow data centers. This overlay approach satisfies that goal and then goes one step further by ensuring that we further limit data center development to the Eastalco area. I look forward to seeing the details and working to implement this important piece of legislation."

Council Member Renee Knapp (at-large): "Frederick County is emerging as a leader for sensible data center regulations that address community concerns for sustainability while supporting an industry that adds important diversification to our local economy. I am proud to have been part of a solution that addresses the concerns of our community while providing everyone the certainty and clarity they deserve."

Council Member Jerry Donald (District 1): "I would like to thank County Executive Fitzwater for brokering a bipartisan compromise that both encourages economic development while protecting the rights of landowners to peacefully enjoy their property."

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