

LOWER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING

Tuesday, October 6, 2026, 7:00 p.m.

To join the meeting via Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81477289822?pwd=kazyWerVtQNoPeba4Flx8O1TATTbTT.1>

Call #: 1-646-876-9923



CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

DATA CENTER ORDINANCE

1. Zoning Officer Presentation: proposed zoning regulations for data centers
 - Community questions and discussion
2. Consider authorization to initiate the adoption process, including advertisement of a legal notice for a public hearing, of an ordinance amendment adding data center regulations to the Township's Zoning Ordinance

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Citizen comments, concerns, questions for items not on the agenda
(Comments on agenda items will be taken when those items are discussed by the Board)

ADJOURNMENT

UPCOMING MEETING DATES*

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION	THURS	12/03/2026	7:00 P.M.
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS	TUES	10/13/2026	7:00 P.M.
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL	WED	10/14/2026	7:00 P.M.
ZONING HEARING BOARD	THURS	10/08/2026	6:00 P.M.
PARKS AND RECREATION	TUES	10/20/2026	6:00 P.M.
PLANNING COMMISSION	WED	10/21/2026	7:00 P.M.

*Please check the Township website to confirm meeting dates and times.



MEMORANDUM

ATTN: Board of Supervisors

DATE: October 2, 2026

FROM: Jamie P. Worman, Assistant Township Manager *Jamie Worman*

SUBJ: Data Center Discussion- Draft Ordinance Amendment

Recommended Motion: To authorize the initiation of the formal ordinance amendment and adoption process including the public advertisement of a future hearing to consider the proposed Data Center Ordinance Amendment

On July 28, 2026, the Board of Supervisors (BOS) declared portions of the Lower Gwynedd Township Zoning Ordinance substantively invalid. On August 25, 2026, the BOS approved Resolution #2026-17, identifying the invalid provisions to be addressed through the curative amendment process. These actions followed the recognition that the Township's current Zoning Ordinance does not specifically provide for data centers or establish regulations, standards, or other land use requirements governing their development. To address this deficiency and preserve the Township's ability to establish appropriate land use standards for data centers, the BOS initiated the curative amendment process authorized under the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). Since that time, Staff has been developing a comprehensive data center ordinance that would establish a regulatory framework for data centers while addressing potential impacts on neighboring properties, utilities, water use, noise, traffic, emergency response, environmental protection, and decommissioning.

At the October 6, 2026, BOS meeting, there will be a public discussion regarding data centers and the proposed ordinance provisions. A summary of the draft ordinance is attached to this memo for reference. Staff intends to use the discussion to gather community input and further refine the proposed ordinance. In addition, Staff is requesting authorization from the BOS to begin the formal ordinance amendment and adoption process.

PROPOSED DRAFT DATA CENTER ORDINANCE

The Data Center Ordinance is proposed as an amendment to an existing zoning district within Lower Gwynedd Township. Current planning standards generally recommend that data centers be located in areas already zoned for industrial uses. This ordinance would change Lower Gwynedd Township's zoning rules to allow data centers in the F-Industrial District, but only through a Conditional Use approval process. It also creates detailed rules intended to control their location, appearance, noise, water use, power supply, emergency preparedness, and eventual removal. Below are the highlights of what the ordinance does and what it will address.

Overall Purpose

The ordinance is intended to establish a clear framework for data centers while addressing potential impacts on neighboring properties, utilities, water use, noise, traffic, emergency response, environmental protection, and the eventual reuse of the property. Pennsylvania law does not allow municipalities to completely ban legal land uses, including data centers, but we are permitted to craft an ordinance with reasonable regulations to protect residents' health, safety, and quality of life while still allowing this type of development.

What the Ordinance Does

- Allows data centers only in the F-Industrial District; with the requirements below, that means a data center would be permitted in the southeastern portion of 500 Railroad Ave.



- Allows data centers only as a Conditional Use, meaning each proposed facility would be subject to Board of Supervisors review and approval in advance of moving forward with any type of land development.
- Defines data centers and related uses, including associated infrastructure and outdoor backup power equipment.

Site Design & Location

- Requires a detailed development plan, including site plans, building elevations, renderings, and information about building materials, colors, textures, and architectural design.
- Establishes a 750-foot setback from residential districts.
- Requires data center accessory structures and equipment to remain within the permitted building envelope.
- Requires emergency access that meets applicable fire-access requirements.

Landscaping & Screening

- Requires vegetated buffers along property lines, with larger enhanced buffering where a data center is adjacent to residential areas.
- Requires mechanical and electrical equipment to be enclosed or screened where feasible, using buildings, landscaping, or other approved screening.
- Addresses the visual impact of utility substations and other outdoor equipment.

Utilities & Water

- Requires the facility to be served by public electric, water, and sewer utilities.
- Applicants must demonstrate that sufficient utility capacity exists to serve the proposed facility.
- If additional utility improvements are necessary, the applicant is responsible for providing and paying for them.
- Requires closed-loop cooling systems to reduce water consumption unless an alternative system can demonstrate lower water and energy use.

Power & Hazardous Materials

- Establishes restrictions on the storage and handling of hazardous materials.
- Requires documentation demonstrating adequate electrical capacity.
- Limits backup generators to emergency/backup use, rather than routine or supplemental power generation.
- Establishes specific hours for routine generator testing and maintenance.

Noise & Vibration

- Establishes maximum noise levels at property lines, with greater protection for properties containing residential uses.
- Requires multiple sound studies:
 - Before approval
 - During the building-permit process
 - After the facility begins operating
 - Annually thereafter
- Requires corrective measures if the facility does not meet the ordinance's noise limits.
- Requires a vibration study to demonstrate that equipment-related vibration does not extend beyond the property line.

Required Studies & Plans

Applicants would be required to provide a range of technical studies and plans, including:

- Traffic Impact Study
- Vibration Study
- Detailed Site Plan
- Sound Studies
- Emergency Response Plan
- Fire and emergency-response training requirements
- Energy Usage Plan, including consideration of renewable and alternative energy
- Thermal Impact Plan addressing heat generated by the facility

Decommissioning & Financial Protection

- Establishes requirements and deadlines for closing and removing an abandoned data center.
- Requires the owner to notify the Township when operations cease.
- Generally requires the facility to be dismantled and removed within 12 months after abandonment.
- Requires the owner to provide financial security to ensure funds are available for decommissioning and property restoration.
- Requires the financial security to be reviewed periodically to account for changing removal costs.