

DATA CENTER RESOURCES & CONTACTS FOR GEORGIA COMMUNITIES

This document contains helpful resources and contact information for organizations working on data center issues in Georgia, organized by what kind of help each one offers: understanding the basics, zoning and legal guidance, local government planning, community benefits, and utility rates.

START HERE: UNDERSTAND THE BASICS

- **Science for Georgia** offers a Georgia-specific data center organizing toolkit for communities, data, a live map of data center projects statewide, and other helpful resources.
scienceforgeorgia.org/knowledge-base1/data-centers-big-power-small-jobs | info@Sci4GA.org | (470) 705-1661
- **GA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CAES)** Georgia-specific research on how data centers affect surface water and groundwater.
caes.uga.edu | **Water Q&A:** fieldreport.caes.uga.edu/publications/TP121 | (706) 542-3924
- **Georgia Public Service Commission (PSC)** — Data Center Fact Sheet State-published fact sheet on data centers and utility rate impacts.
psc.ga.gov/site/downloads/datacenterfactsheet.pdf | (404) 656-4501 or toll-free 1-800-282-5813

ZONING, PERMITTING & LEGAL GUIDANCE

- **Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC)** Recommended first call for communities that need legal guidance on zoning, Community Benefit Agreement language, or permitting challenges. Provides free guidance to communities and environmental advocates; not a developer-side firm. Publisher of the report "Getting It Right: Local Approaches to Data Center Development."
selc.org | **Report:** selc.org/resource/getting-it-right-local-approaches-to-data-center-development | (404) 521-9900
- **Georgia Data Center Ordinance Hub (EPICenter, Georgia Tech)** Interactive, side-by-side comparison of data center land-use ordinances across roughly 180 Georgia jurisdictions. Useful for any community drafting or evaluating its own ordinance.
epicenter.energy.gatech.edu/data-center
- **Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Development of Regional Impact (DRI) Process** The state process that reviews large-scale developments, including many data centers, for regional impact. Communities should contact their Regional Commission directly to check DRI status or ask process questions.
dca.georgia.gov/community-assistance/coordinated-planning/regional-planning/developments-regional-impact
DRI FAQs: dca.georgia.gov/developments-regional-impact-dri-faqs
- **Georgia EPD Watershed Protection Branch** Issues water withdrawal permits and leads regional water supply planning; the agency to contact about water availability, permit applications, and water quality data for a proposed data center site.
epd.georgia.gov/watershed-protection-branch | **Regional water planning:** waterplanning.georgia.gov (404) 463-1511 | **Environmental complaint line:** (800) 241-4113

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PLANNING SUPPORT

- **ACCG (Association County Commissioners of Georgia)** Best-practice sheets and conference resources for county officials, including "15 Best Practices for Counties Considering Data Centers." Primarily oriented toward county government members.
Web: accg.org/story2.php?id=2335
- **Digital First Communities (Georgia Tech Center for Economic Development Research)** A facilitated planning program that helps local governments prepare for data center development before a developer arrives, including tax digest impact analysis and community listening sessions.
innovate.gatech.edu (CEDR) | Betsy McGriff, Digital First Program Specialist – betsy.mcgriff@innovate.gatech.edu
- **National Association of Development Organizations (NADO)** – Data Center Fundamentals for EDD Staff Offers a national report written for Economic Development District (EDD) staff, covering data center basics, local and regional impacts, and the roles EDDs can play: advising communities, convening regional planning, offering zoning guidance, and supporting workforce initiatives.
nado.org/data-center-fundamentals | (202) 921-4440

TAX INCENTIVES & ECONOMIC DATA

- **Georgia Department of Revenue - High-Technology Data Center Equipment Exemption** Administers Georgia's sales and use tax exemption for qualifying data center equipment purchases, which requires the data center to meet minimum investment and job-creation thresholds and file annual reports. DOR also publishes a county-by-county breakdown of aggregate expenditures claimed under the exemption, a useful way for a community to check actual investment against what was promised.
*dor.georgia.gov/high-technology-data-center-equipment-exemption
County-level exemption data: dor.georgia.gov/data-centers-sales-use-tax-exemption-aggregate-expenditures-county | Phone (Taxpayer Services): (877) 423-6711*

NEGOTIATING COMMUNITY BENEFITS

- **Georgia WAND (Women's Action for New Directions)** Education Fund Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) framework and guidance for communities negotiating with developers.
gawand.org/community-benefits-framework | info@georgiawand.org | (404) 524-5999

UTILITY RATES & RATEPAYER PROTECTION

- **Georgia PSC Public Interest Advocacy Staff & Consumer Affairs** Represents residential and small commercial ratepayers in proceedings before the PSC; Consumer Affairs staff answers questions about bills and rate impacts.
psc.ga.gov/about-the-psc/consumer-corner | (404) 656-4501 or toll-free 1-800-282-5813

Drawdown Georgia does not take a position for or against any specific project. The toolkit is designed to support informed, community-centered decision-making.