

Chippewa County
Planning & Zoning Committee
Regular Meeting
August 3, 2026
Chippewa County Courthouse, Room 302
5:00 PM



District 17, Chair
George Rohmeyer, Jr.

District 9, Vice-Chair
Joel Seidlitz

District 7
Jason Bergeron

District 14
David Kelley

District 16
Rocky Kempe

**Chippewa County
Planning & Zoning Committee
Regular Meeting
August 3, 2026
Chippewa County Courthouse, Room 302
5:00 PM**

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Members of the Public Wishing to Be Heard

(Comments will be limited to 5 minutes per speaker.)

4. Consent Agenda

(Unless separation of an item is requested, all items will be adopted under one motion.)

1. Approve the Agenda

5. Reports

6. Public Hearing - For Discussion and Action

1. Ordinance to amend Chapter 70 of the Chippewa County Code of Ordinances to adopt a Temporary Moratorium on Data Center Development

7. Business Items

1. Ordinance to amend Chapter 70 of the Chippewa County Code of Ordinances to adopt a Temporary Moratorium on Data Center Development

8. Agenda Items for Future Consideration

9. Adjourn

Chippewa County shall attempt to provide reasonable special accommodations to the public for access to its public meetings, provided reasonable notice of special need is given. If special accommodations for a meeting are desired, contact the County Clerk's Office at 715-726-7980.

Members of the Chippewa County Board of Supervisors who are not members of this committee are entitled to attend this meeting. It is possible that the attendance of one or more such nonmember Supervisors may create a quorum of some other county board committee, board or commission. Such a quorum is unintended and the nonmember Supervisors are not meeting for the purpose of exercising the responsibility, authority, power, or duties of any other committee, board or commission.

Published: July 29, 2026

CHIPPEWA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & ZONING

• 711 North Bridge Street, Chippewa Falls, WI 54729 • Phone: 715.726.7940 • www.chippewacountywi.gov •

Land Management

Land Planning

Land Records & G.I.S.

POWTS & Wells

(Posted: July 24, 2026)

OFFICIAL

Notice of Public Hearing on a Proposed Amendment to the Chippewa County Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance

PUBLIC NOTICE is given to all persons residing in Chippewa County that a public hearing will be held on August 3, 2026 at 5:00 PM, in Room 302, Chippewa County Courthouse, 711 N. Bridge Street, Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin for the purpose of receiving comments and approving amendments to the Chippewa County Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 70.

The proposed amendment will create section 70-9, entitled Temporary Moratorium on Data Center Development. A copy of the proposed amendment, dated July 24, 2026, will be on file and open for public inspection in the Chippewa County Department of Planning & Zoning. All persons interested are invited to attend this hearing. Written comments will be accepted until 12:00 Noon on August 3, 2026 and can be sent or delivered to: Chippewa County Department of Planning & Zoning, Room 009, 711 N. Bridge Street, Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin 54729.

Douglas Clary, Director
Department of Planning & Zoning
Chippewa County, Wisconsin

ORD. XX-26

**ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 70 OF THE CHIPPEWA COUNTY CODE OF ORDINANCES TO
ADOPT A TEMPORARY MORATORIUM ON DATA CENTER DEVELOPMENT**

1. That section 70-9 of the Chippewa County Code of Ordinances is hereby created as follows:

Sec. 70-9 Temporary Moratorium on Data Center Development

- (a) *Recitals.* The following recitals are true and accurate, and are therefore incorporated herein as findings of fact and shall be used not just for reference:

WHEREAS, the Chippewa County Board of Supervisors ("County Board") has the authority to enact zoning regulations and adopt interim measures to protect the public health, safety, and general welfare pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 59.03, Wis. Stat. § 59.69(4), and other applicable provisions of Wisconsin law; and

WHEREAS, recent technological advancements have significantly increased the demand for data centers and associated infrastructure supporting cloud computing, artificial intelligence, digital communications, electronic commerce, financial services, governmental operations, scientific research, and other data processing activities; and

WHEREAS, modern data centers are substantially different from traditional commercial, industrial, and other manufacturing buildings because data centers often require extensive and unique electrical infrastructure, high-capacity transmission facilities, substations, backup generation systems, battery energy storage systems, cooling equipment, fiber optic infrastructure, specialized water supply systems and wastewater facilities, and other specialized improvements necessary for continuous operation; and

WHEREAS, construction and operation of a data center in Chippewa County may require substantial public and private infrastructure improvements, including roadway improvements, utility extensions, electrical substations, transmission lines, telecommunications facilities, and emergency service capabilities that are not currently addressed by the existing Chippewa County Code of Ordinances ("County Ordinances"); and

WHEREAS, data centers may create general land use impacts but, due to the particular nature of a proposed data center, may also create unique impacts that are not addressed in the County Ordinances, including unique impacts involving noise from mechanical cooling equipment and emergency generators, exterior lighting, visual impacts, construction traffic, water consumption, wastewater generation, stormwater management, emergency response planning, hazardous materials, fire suppression

systems, and compatibility with neighboring residential, agricultural, commercial, and industrial properties; and

WHEREAS, associated infrastructure serving a data center may extend well beyond the principal building and may include electrical substations, transmission facilities, battery energy storage systems, cooling towers, water storage facilities, wastewater treatment equipment, fuel storage, fiber optic infrastructure, security improvements, and other accessory structures necessary for operation of a data center; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 70 of the Chippewa County Code of Ordinances (“County Zoning Ordinance”), presently contains no specific definition of a Data Center (as defined herein) and does not establish zoning districts, permitting procedures, development standards, setback requirements, landscaping standards, noise limitations, buffering requirements, decommissioning requirements, financial assurance requirements, or other regulations specifically applicable to data centers, and the unique impacts of use that may result from a data center within Chippewa County; and

WHEREAS, allowing applications for data centers to proceed before comprehensive zoning regulations are considered and adopted could result in inconsistent land use decisions, insufficient development standards, conflicts with surrounding land uses, increased demands on public infrastructure, and impacts to the health, safety, and general welfare of Chippewa County’s residents, natural resources, property, businesses and visitors; and

WHEREAS, the County Board has discussed whether it is in the public interest to temporarily preserve the status quo relating to data center construction and use in Chippewa County while Chippewa County: (a) researches the land use, environmental, health, and other impacts of data centers; (b) consults with other counties and municipalities, utilities, emergency responders, property owners, planning professionals, environmental agencies, and other stakeholders regarding the potential impacts of data centers in Chippewa County; (c) determines whether any certain areas should be designated for a data center if a data center is determined to require special regulations; and (d) prepares any required amendment to the Chippewa County Comprehensive Plan and comprehensive zoning regulations addressing the location, construction, operation, expansion, maintenance, and decommissioning of data centers within Chippewa County; and

WHEREAS, the County Board intends that this temporary moratorium shall not prohibit future data centers in Chippewa County, but rather provide sufficient time to develop objective, reasonable, and legally defensible land use regulations that provide

certainty to both the public and prospective applicants while protecting the public health, safety, and general welfare from the potential impacts of a data center in Chippewa County; and

WHEREAS, the County Board has discussed the appropriate timeframe for a temporary moratorium, and whether a ten (10) month temporary moratorium is in the best interest of the public health, safety, and general welfare, during which there will be a moratorium upon the consideration of any application to develop, construct or operate a data center and/or issuance of any permits or approvals for data centers; and

WHEREAS, the County Board has discussed whether a ten (10) month temporary moratorium is reasonably necessary to allow adequate time for research, ordinance preparation, public review, town board recommendations, the County Planning and Zoning Committee ("Committee") consideration, legal counsel review, County Board consideration and action, and implementation of comprehensive regulations governing data centers.

- (b) *Declaration of Moratorium.* There is hereby imposed a temporary moratorium on the acceptance of any application to construct or operate any Data Center (as defined herein), and consideration and/or issuance of any zoning permit, building permit, conditional use permit, or zoning approval for a Data Center under any part of the County Ordinances or any other provision of applicable law. The temporary moratorium set forth shall be referred to herein as the "Moratorium".
- (1) *Definition.* For purposes of this Moratorium, "**Data Center**" means a building, campus, or group of buildings used for the primary purpose of cloud computing, artificial intelligence computing, digital storage, networking, internet hosting, colocation services, cryptocurrency processing, high-performance computing, or other electronic data processing activities, together with all associated infrastructure necessary for operation of which the total square feet exceeds 20,000 square feet. Associated infrastructure includes any building, facility, equipment or improvement (temporary or permanent) that is reasonably necessary for the construction, operation, maintenance, expansion, or decommissioning of a Data Center, including but not limited to: server buildings and supporting structures; electrical substations; electrical transmission and distribution facilities; battery energy storage systems (BESS); emergency backup generators; fuel storage facilities; cooling equipment and cooling towers; chilled water systems; water supply and storage facilities; wastewater collection and treatment facilities; fiber optic infrastructure; telecommunications equipment;

security buildings and fencing; parking, loading, and access roads; and any other infrastructure constructed primarily to support the operation of a Data Center.

(2) *Exceptions to the Moratorium.* This Moratorium shall not apply to:

- a. Routine maintenance or repair of existing legally established facilities.
- b. Server rooms or computer equipment accessory to an existing principal use that does not meet the definition of a Data Center.
- c. Public safety communication facilities owned or operated by a governmental entity.
- d. Utility facilities, energy generation facilities, and energy storage facilities that are not constructed solely or primarily to serve a proposed Data Center.

(3) Nothing contained herein shall be construed to authorize any use otherwise prohibited under the County Ordinances.

(c) *Purpose.* The purpose of this Moratorium is to preserve the status quo while Chippewa County researches, evaluates, and develops comprehensive plans and zoning regulations governing the siting, construction, operation, expansion, maintenance, and decommissioning of Data Centers in order to preserve and protect public health, safety and general welfare.

(d) *Authority.* This Moratorium is adopted pursuant to the authority granted to counties under Wis. Stat. § 59.03, Wis. Stat. § 59.69(4), and any other applicable provisions of Wisconsin law authorizing counties to regulate land use and adopt temporary moratoriums to preserve the public health, safety, and general welfare.

The County Board finds that adoption of this Moratorium constitutes a reasonable exercise of its police powers and zoning authority for the preservation and protection of the public health, safety and general welfare of Chippewa County's residents, natural resources, property, businesses and visitors.

(e) *Duration of Moratorium.* The moratorium set forth in this Moratorium shall become effective upon adoption and publication as required by law, and shall remain in effect for a period of **ten (10) months**, unless sooner repealed, modified, superseded, or replaced by action of the County Board.

The moratorium set forth in this Moratorium shall automatically terminate upon the effective date of an ordinance establishing permanent zoning regulations governing Data Centers regardless of whether the full ten-month period has elapsed, unless otherwise determined by the County Board.

The County Board reserves the right to amend this Moratorium as permitted by Wisconsin law if it determines such amendment is necessary to protect the public health, safety, and general welfare or to facilitate implementation of permanent zoning regulations.

- (f) *Direction to Develop Data Center Regulations.* During the period of this Moratorium, the Committee, and the Chippewa County Director of Planning and Zoning (the “Administrator”), or the Administrator’s delegate(s), are directed to research and draft an amendment to the County Zoning Ordinance, to be presented to the County Board, providing comprehensive and appropriate regulations of Data Centers to protect the health, safety and general welfare of Chippewa County’s residents, natural resources, property, businesses, visitors and the public from the potential impacts of Data Center construction and operation in Chippewa County. It is the intention of the County Board to amend the Chippewa County Comprehensive Plan and the County Zoning Ordinance by adopting an amendment to the existing County Comprehensive Plan and County Zoning Ordinance to address the siting and regulations for the development and use of Data Centers, before the expiration of the moratorium set forth in this Moratorium.
- (g) *Subjects for Consideration.* In preparing an amendment to the existing County Comprehensive Plan and County Zoning Ordinance, the Committee and the Administrator shall review the possible impacts that Data Centers may have on the health, safety and general welfare of the residents, natural resources, property, businesses and visitors of Chippewa County. The Administrator may, in his or her discretion, consult with other counties and municipalities, review and research appropriate studies and information pertaining to data centers, associated infrastructure, siting impacts, land use impacts, and other impacts, and then report back to the Committee. The Administrator may also, in his or her discretion, consult with any professionals, experts or scholars with knowledge about the possible impacts of these systems, including but not limited to engineers, lawyers, law enforcement officers, fire fighters and those with specialized knowledge in the fields of data storage facilities’ potential impacts on the human environment, geology, soils, air and water quality and conservation, emergency response, or other public health or environmental protection issues, and then report back to the Committee. The Committee shall provide opportunities for public participation in its review process, and consider the public health, safety and general welfare of Chippewa County’s residents, natural resources, wildlife, property, businesses and visitors throughout the process.
- (h) *Severability.* If a section, subsection, paragraph, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Moratorium is declared unconstitutional or invalid for any reason by any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Moratorium.

(i) *Construction.* If the provisions of this Moratorium are found to be inconsistent with other provisions of this ordinance or any County Ordinances, the provisions of this Moratorium are deemed to control.

2. That this ordinance amendment shall take effect upon passage and publication.

Forwarded to the County Board by the Planning & Zoning Committee.



Statement of Explanation
Ordinance to amend Chapter 70 of the Chippewa County Code of
Ordinances to adopt a Temporary Moratorium on Data Center
Development