Report Number: EC2026-01010

Meeting: Executive Committee

Meeting Date: 2026 November 03

NOTICE OF MOTION

RE: Addressing Large-Scale Data Centre Impacts on Municipal Resources

Sponsoring Member(s) of Council: Councillors Wyness, Dhaliwal, Yule, Pantazopolous, Mayor Farkas

WHEREAS Alberta is seeing exponential interest and growth in large-scale data centres which is placing significant and immediate demands on electrical and water infrastructure and resources. Further, other jurisdictions in North America with large-scale data centres have experienced impacts on water resources, agricultural lands, electrical grid infrastructure, energy costs, noise levels, property values, and disruptions to community character.

WHEREAS The term “data centre” encompasses a very broad scale of technology infrastructure. Small and medium-scale data centres have energy, water and land needs comparable to other commercial and industrial businesses and are an important part of our business ecosystem in Calgary. Hyperscale or mega-scale data centers for AI and cloud computing are massive, resource-intensive campuses that have significant impacts to the community and the region.

WHEREAS In response, members of the public are looking to elected officials to ensure the prioritization of public interests over those of large-scale data centres.

WHEREAS The municipalities of Rocky View County, AB, Oakville, ON, Cumberland, NS, Saskatoon, SK, and Mississauga, ON have very recently passed planning bylaws to temporarily restrict data centre-related applications pending further reporting and/or regulatory changes. Miramichi, NB, has paused changes to their zoning bylaws upon further study and reporting. Essex County, ON, Terrace, BC, and Mountainview, AB are reviewing and/or working on changes to their land use bylaw to further regulate data centre development.

WHEREAS data centres can represent an emerging large-volume water use, depending on their design and cooling requirements. Calgary’s Water Efficiency Plan identifies the need to establish criteria for large-volume water servicing requests and associated water-efficiency measures.

WHEREAS As a regional water utility provider, the City of Calgary must responsibly manage the demands placed on its utility infrastructure by customers within the City of Calgary and through our regional utility customers.

WHEREAS Current water policies set out requirements for regional customers and provide The City with authorities to review and deny new servicing requests, specifically:

a. Section 1.6 of the Council Policy on Regional Water, Wastewater and Stormwater Servicing (CP2018-01) states: *“The City will not provide Regional Servicing that compromises service levels to existing city customers and/or The City’s ability to service current and future growth within its own boundaries.”*
b. Existing policy sections and mechanisms in the Master Servicing Agreement that support the responsible stewardship of utility-infrastructure, including sections that:
    (1) Require that ‘*The Customer shall notify The City of the connection of new large customers within the Service Area whose daily Potable Water or Wastewater flows exceed one (1) MLD*.’

(2) Require City approved cross contamination controls and operations to mitigate contamination risk from regional customer system.

AND WHEREAS Land Use Bylaw 1P2007 does not specifically define data centre uses, and applications for data centre development must be evaluated and approved in accordance with the current applicable requirements of the Land Use Bylaw.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED That Council direct the Chief Administrative Officer to:

1. Place a temporary moratorium on bringing forward any new land use redesignation applications for Council decision relating to large-scale data centres, pending the outcomes of the report and potential bylaw amendments as directed in #2.

2. Bring a report to the March 2027 Public Hearing Meeting of Council that would:
    a. Prepare amendments to Land Use Bylaw 1P2007 that take into consideration varying scales to specifically define data centres and determine appropriate land use districts, including Direct Control Districts; and
    b. Identify any other supporting bylaws and recommended changes required as a result of the directed changes to the Land Use Bylaw 1P2007 above.

3. Reaffirm with regional water servicing partners the requirements relevant to servicing large volume uses in their jurisdictions set out under the Master Servicing Agreements and the Policy on Regional Water, Wastewater and Stormwater Servicing (CP2018-01).

4. Prepare a report back to Infrastructure and Planning Committee no later than Q4 2027 on:
    a. the risks, implications and opportunities of data centres and associated infrastructure in Calgary, including but not limited to:
        i. environmental and economic impacts, jurisdictional, legal and legislative considerations, emergency preparedness and public safety and comparative approaches in other municipalities;
        ii. and, if applicable, recommendations for additional bylaw amendments, including but not limited to tax bylaws and policies, the Land Use Bylaw and the Community Standards Bylaw.

5. Prepare a report back to Community Development Committee no later than Q4 2027:
    a. The cumulative impact to water security from large volume water users, including but not limited to:
        i. regional water servicing, water infrastructure, regional upstream water use and waste discharge, risk management strategies for large volume users, and considerations for supporting customer needs, driving water management and re-use innovation for large-volume customers.
        ii. and, if applicable, recommendations for amendments, to the Council Policy on Regional Water, Wastewater and Stormwater Servicing, Water Utility Bylaw and future Regional Servicing Agreements.
        iii.

Attachment(s)

1. Notice of Motion Checklist