Pine County, Minnesota
Reaffirmed Ordinance #2026-15

Ordinance Authorizing a Study and Placing a Moratorium on Data Centers in the County of Pine

The Board of Commissioners of Pine County, Minnesota, hereby ordains the following:

Section 1: Authority & Purpose
The purpose and intent of this interim ordinance ("Ordinance") is to impose, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 394.34 temporary restrictions on data center developments during the period of this Ordinance to protect the planning process and the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the County.

Section 2: Jurisdiction
The regulations in this Ordinance apply to all areas of Pine County with the following exceptions:

a. Areas within an incorporated city, except for any incorporated city that is regulated under the jurisdiction of the Pine County Zoning Ordinance.
b. Areas within the jurisdiction of a township which has adopted data center regulations and requirements which addresses energy usage, water usage, and localized impacts of data centers.

Section 3: Definitions

a. "County" is the County of Pine.
b. "County Board" is the Pine County Board of Commissioners
c. "Data Center" has the meaning given in Minnesota Statutes, section 216B.02 subdivision 11.
d. "Zoning Board" is the Pine County board described in the Pine County Subdivision and Platting Ordinance Section 11.02.

Section 4: Findings
The County Board hereby finds and determines as follows:

a. Existing zoning regulations do not properly address energy usage, water usage, or localize impacts of data centers.
b. Jurisdictions throughout the state of Minnesota are experiencing increased interest in the development of data centers.
c. In order to protect the planning process while the County undertakes a study of its data center regulations, the County Board determines it is in the best interest of the County to adopt an interim ordinance imposing a moratorium on data center developments in the areas of jurisdiction of this ordinance.

Section 5: Study Authorized
The County Board hereby authorizes and directs the Zoning Board and County Administrator to conduct a study of data center regulations and to make recommendations as follows:

a. If the existing county ordinances should be amended
b. If a standalone ordinance as an overlay district is more appropriate
c. Specific regulations to address health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the County in regard to data center developments.

Section 6: Moratorium
A moratorium is hereby imposed on, and the County or any jurisdiction covered in Section 2 of this ordinance shall not issue any approvals for any data center development.

Section 7: Application and Duration
This Ordinance shall remain in effect for twelve (12) months from the date of its adoption, until it is expressly repealed by County Board resolution, or until the effective date of a new zoning ordinance that includes data center. As part of interpreting this Ordinance, the Zoning Board may issue written clarifications of, and variances from, its terms as needed to effectuate its purpose and intent.

Section 8: Severability
Every section, provision and part of this Ordinance is declared severable from every other section, provision and part thereof. If any section, provision or part of this Ordinance is held to be invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such judgment shall not invalidate any other section, provision or part of this Ordinance.

Section 9: Effective Date
This Ordinance shall be effective August 18, 2026.

ADOPTED by the Pine County Board of Commissioners on this 18th day of August, 2026.

Joshua Mohr, Pine County Board Chair

Attest: _____
Kelly Schroeder, Pine County Administrator
Clerk to the Pine County Board of Commissioners

Drafted by:
Pine County
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