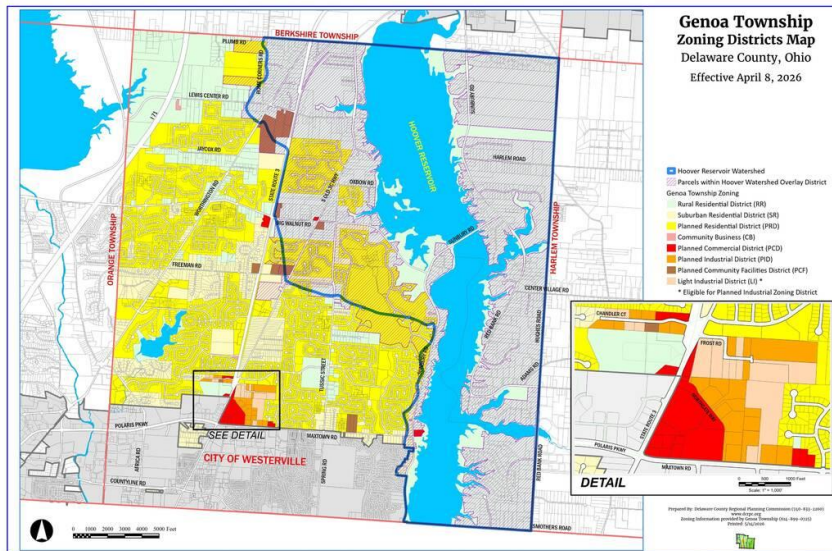


Genoa Twp. takes action on data centers

By Gary Budzak – July 10, 2026



WESTERVILLE — Genoa Township's Development and Zoning Department is being proactive in its approach to data centers.

"This past April, the Township Trustees approved numerous revisions to Genoa Township's Zoning Resolution, concluding over two and a half years of diligent efforts," said the township's latest newsletter. "The amendment went into effect on May 14."

With regards to data centers, the newsletter article said, "They are a hot topic in Ohio at the moment and for good reason. Many communities are struggling with how to regulate them and are considering moratoriums while they figure things out. Outright banning a given land use is generally not recommended as it is subject to legal challenge and, if overturned, could open the floodgates resulting in the exact opposite of what the ban had intended to accomplish. Since such action may not hold up to scrutiny, Genoa Township elected to take a different approach that is more practical and less risky with a relatively quick implementation time. The simple solution? Allow data centers, but to ensure they fit the vision and character of the community, significantly restrict their location, size, and scope to minimize negative impacts as much as possible."

Using legal counsel, here's what the amended zoning allows:

- "Data centers are not permitted to be located on a lot with frontage on an arterial street (e.g. state Route 3, Maxtown) but are similarly only permitted on lots with frontage on roads that connect directly to an arterial street," the newsletter said. "The lot also has to be located within either the Light Industrial or Planned Industrial District. This limits potential sites to the Frost,

Chandler, and Northgate corridors as the township's comprehensive plan recommends not expanding industrial zoning to other areas of the township at this time.

- "Data centers must be set back at least 1,000 feet from any lot containing a dwelling in a residential district as well as from other sensitive land uses such as cemeteries, day cares, K-12 schools, public parks, and religious establishments. Data centers are also prohibited from being established within 1,000 feet of any other data center.
- "Data centers are not permitted to exceed 20,000 square feet in size. For reference, this is smaller than the 26,000+ square-foot building that houses Buckeye Gymnastics.
- "The lot holding the data center must retain at least 25% of pervious green space.
- "The perimeter of the lot would have to be significantly screened in accordance with the township's new, extensive landscaping requirements.
- "Data centers would have to follow noise control standards within the township's zoning code."

"This is just the start," the article concludes. "As data centers continue to be developed elsewhere, lessons are being learned, reports are being written, and regulations are being refined. Zoning codes are never truly complete. Genoa Township officials and staff will continue to monitor the evolution of data centers and will look to amend the zoning code when or if it is found to be in the best interest of the community."