

**ANCHORAGE, ALASKA**  
**AO No. 2026-27**

1 **AN ORDINANCE OF THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY AMENDING ANCHORAGE**  
2 **MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTER 21.05, 21.40 (OLD CODE), AND 21.50 (OLD**  
3 **CODE) AND SECTIONS 21.09.050, 21.10.050, AND 21.35.020 (OLD CODE) TO**  
4 **CLARIFY THE LAND USE REVIEW PROCESS FOR DATA CENTERS AND**  
5 **SIMILAR ENERGY-INTENSIVE FACILITIES AND REQUESTING THE**  
6 **PLANNING DEPARTMENT DEVELOP USE-SPECIFIC CRITERIA FOR ENERGY-**  
7 **INTENSIVE USES AND WAIVING PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**  
8 **REVIEW.**

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9  
10 **WHEREAS**, data centers are facilities that house computer servers for processing  
11 and storing data, either for a single enterprise or multiple enterprises, that serve as  
12 critical infrastructure for Internet-based storage, complex software and language  
13 models, artificial intelligence (AI) functions, and other computing needs; and  
14

15 **WHEREAS**, data centers are increasingly common in communities across the U.S.,  
16 with over 3,000 in operation as of 2025 and more being built in order to meet  
17 projected demand for processing and storage capacity;<sup>1</sup> and  
18

19 **WHEREAS**, data center facilities of all sizes have intensive energy needs, and may  
20 be served by onsite power generation or connected to a larger electrical grid; these  
21 facilities also require robust cooling systems, typically using water to remove excess  
22 heat from servers in a closed-loop water recycling system or discharging heated  
23 water, which may include other contaminants, as waste; and  
24

25 **WHEREAS**, communities that are now home to data center facilities have identified  
26 additional operational impacts to surrounding properties, primarily noise generation  
27 and visual impacts of large warehouse-like facilities and campuses; and  
28

29 **WHEREAS**, data centers may be large or small in scale, and small-scale facilities  
30 are already being permitted and developed in Alaska communities including  
31 Wrangell and Cordova; and  
32

33 **WHEREAS**, current Title 21 does not specifically contemplate this use type, with the  
34 closest use type being “data processing facility,” which refers to an operation of  
35 employees processing data, does not address potential impacts of facilities of this  
36 type, and is currently a permitted use in certain zoning districts; and  
37

38 **WHEREAS**, emerging best practices from other communities include land use  
39 regulation of data centers through a clearly-defined use type, development  
40 standards such as visual screening and noise control, and utilizing the development  
41 review process to identify and mitigate impacts on surrounding properties, local

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<sup>1</sup> National League of Cities and Center for Scientific Evidence in Public Issues (EPI Center), “A primer for local governments: Understanding data centers,” April 28, 2025. <https://www.nlc.org/resource/fact-sheet-understanding-data-centers/>

1 energy infrastructure, and water systems; now, therefore,

2  
3 **THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY ORDAINS:**

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5 **Section 1.** Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.05.060 is hereby amended to  
6 read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set*  
7 *out*):

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9 **21.05.060 Industrial uses: Definitions and use-specific standards.**

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11 This section defines the general industrial use categories and specific  
12 industrial use types listed in Table 21.05-1. This section also contains use-  
13 specific standards that apply to specific use types. The use-specific  
14 standards apply regardless of whether the use type is permitted as a matter  
15 of right, subject to a site plan review process, or subject to the conditional  
16 use process.

17  
18 A. Industrial service. This category includes establishments engaged in  
19 the repair or servicing of agricultural, industrial, business, or consumer  
20 machinery, equipment, products, or by-products. Firms that service  
21 consumer goods do so by mainly providing centralized services for  
22 separate retail outlets. Contractors and building maintenance services  
23 and similar uses perform services off-site. Few customers, especially  
24 the general public, come to the site. Accessory activities may include  
25 retail sales, offices, parking, and storage. Specific use types include:

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28 2. Data Center.

29  
30 a. Definition. A facility or co-located facilities that house  
31 computer servers for processing and storing data and  
32 requires at least 20 megawatts of electrical demand at  
33 peak operation. There is minimal onsite human activity  
34 during normal operations. Accessory uses may include  
35 offices, power generation and storage, water storage  
36 and treatment, maintenance areas, vehicle and  
37 equipment parking and storage.

38  
39 i. Geographically dispersed buildings, equipment,  
40 structures, and other stationary infrastructure  
41 used for the same purpose and owned or  
42 operated by the same entity may be considered  
43 single facility for the purposes of this section.

44  
45 ii. A facility with less than 2,000 servers shall be  
46 considered a small data center. A facility with  
47 2,000 or more servers shall be considered a large  
48 data center.

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50 b. Use-specific standards.

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i. Design standards. A data center facility must be designed to minimize adverse visual impacts on surrounding development as demonstrated by the submission of elevations, architectural sketches, or sight line studies.

(A) Designs shall provide visual screening and reduce noise levels, any equipment necessary for cooling, ventilating, or otherwise operating the facility, including power generators or other power supply equipment, must be fully enclosed, except where determined by the Director not to be mechanically feasible based on the manufacturer specifications.

(B) If the Director determines it is not mechanically feasible to fully enclose the equipment, it must be screened by a wall or similar barrier. In addition, any equipment as referenced above that is located on the ground and any accessory electrical substation must be screened from view from abutting lots and from rights-of-way by a visually solid wall or a building. This standard does not apply to solar panels.”

(C) A data center facility must include a main entrance feature that is differentiated from the remainder of the building façade by a change in building material, pattern, texture, color, or accent material. The entrance feature must also either project or recess from the adjoining building plane.

ii. Landscaping. If the specific development is considered a large data center, L3 screening landscaping is required where adjacent to residential zones. Otherwise, L2 buffer landscaping is required where adjacent to residential zones. The planning and zoning commission, through the conditional use review, may require additional screening.

iii. Setbacks. Where the property is adjacent to residential or any other sound-sensitive use, a data center facility or ancillary equipment must be located at least 200 feet from the residential or

1 noise-sensitive use. The Director may waive this  
2 requirement only for small data centers.

3  
4 iv. These standards do not apply to accessory  
5 uses.

6  
7 c. Additional submittal requirements for a conditional use  
8 permit.

9  
10 i. Completion of a noise mitigation study for  
11 projected operational noise levels, including at  
12 peak operation, demonstrating that the operation  
13 of the data center will not exceed the standards  
14 stated in AMC subsection 15.70.080A.

15  
16 (A) The study must include consideration of  
17 sound source location and directivity, and  
18 barrier effects of buildings and  
19 topography, for all proposed development  
20 on a lot or site plan.

21  
22 (B) If the development will be completed in  
23 phases, the study must address both the  
24 proposed phase and the ultimate buildout  
25 of the proposed development.

26  
27 ii. If the facility requires connecting to and drawing  
28 power from the surrounding electrical grid, the  
29 application must include a written statement from  
30 the electrical utility or utilities demonstrating that  
31 there is sufficient system capacity to meet the  
32 facility's projected demand at peak operation.  
33 The project application shall document estimated  
34 electrical demand at peak operation.

35  
36 iii. If the facility requires connecting to the public  
37 water system, the application must include a  
38 written statement from the water utility that there  
39 is sufficient water at adequate pressure to meet  
40 the facility's projected daily water demand at peak  
41 operation. The project application shall include all  
42 information the water utility deems necessary to  
43 make these determinations. The water utility may  
44 write that sufficient water quantity and pressure  
45 may be made available through privately  
46 constructed and funded upgrades to the water  
47 system, the construction of which shall be a  
48 condition on the land use permit.

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50 iv. If the facility will discharge wastewater into the  
51 public sewage system, the application must

1 include a written statement from the wastewater  
2 utility that there is adequate capacity in the sewer  
3 system for the facility's discharge at peak  
4 operation and that the applicant has provided the  
5 wastewater utility with reliable information  
6 adequate for the wastewater utility to determine  
7 the facility's ability to comply with the Clean Water  
8 Act (33 U.S.C. Sec. 1251 et seq. (1972)), title 26  
9 of this Code, and all other applicable laws and  
10 regulations. The project application shall include  
11 all information the wastewater utility deems  
12 necessary to make these determinations. In its  
13 written statement, the wastewater utility may  
14 state, additionally or alternatively to concluding  
15 that sufficient capacity exists in the sewer  
16 system.:

17  
18 (A) That sufficient sewer capacity may be  
19 achieved through privately constructed  
20 and funded upgrades to the public sewer  
21 system, the construction of which shall be  
22 a condition on the land use permit, or

23  
24 (B) That based on the information provided by  
25 the applicant, the project's discharge is  
26 likely to result in significant adverse  
27 impacts on the public sewer system or  
28 human health. Such a statement by the  
29 wastewater utility creates a presumption  
30 that the approval criterion at 21.03.080D.7  
31 is not met. This presumption may only be  
32 overcome by clear and convincing  
33 evidence presented to the commission.

34  
35 v. If the facility utilizes an onsite water and  
36 wastewater system, the application must  
37 demonstrate that the project complies with all  
38 applicable Alaska Department of Environmental  
39 Conservation requirements.

40  
41 vi. Evidence of adequate fire detection and  
42 suppression systems at the facility, including for  
43 any onsite power generation and storage  
44 infrastructure.

45  
46 vii. Documentation of anticipated onsite power  
47 generation including energy source(s) and  
48 whether any power generated at the facility in  
49 excess of its operational need may be returned to  
50 the grid, water recycling, reclamation of waste  
51 heat, treatment of contaminants, and any other

strategies to prevent, reduce, or mitigate potential impacts of the facility on the surrounding community.

3. *Data processing facility.*

- a. *Definition.* An establishment where electronic data is processed by employees, including, without limitation, data entry, storage, conversion, or analysis; and subscription and credit card transaction processing.

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(AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO 2013-117, 12-3-13; AO No. 2013-139, § 1, 1-28-14; AO No. 2014-58, § 2(Att. A), 5-20-14; AO No. 2015-133(S), § 3(Exh. A), 2-23-16; AO No. 2015-142(S-1), § 3(Exh. B), 6-21-16; AO No. 2016-3(S), §§ 6, 7, 2-23-16; AO No. 2016-131, § 1, 11-15-16; AO No. 2016-136am, § 2, 11-15-16; AO No. 2016-156, § 1, 12-20-16; AO No. 2017-10, § 1, 1-24-17; AO No. 2017-57, § 1, 4-11-17; AO No. 2017-74, § 1, 5-23-17; AO No. 2017-176, § 4, 1-9-18; AO No. 2017-175(S), § 3(Exh. A), 2-13-18; AO No. 2020-38, § 6, 5-28-20; AO No. 2020-56, § 2, 6-23-20; AO No. 2021-54, § 1, 6-22-21; AO No. 2023-77, §§ 5, 18, 7-25-23; AO No. 2023-42, § 2, 8-22-23; AO No. 2023-87(S-1), § 2(Exh. B), 6-25-24; AO No. 2025-36, § 1, 4-16-25)

**Section 2.** Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.05.010 is hereby amended to read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set out*):

**21.05.010      Table of allowed uses.**

Table 21.05-1 below lists the uses allowed within all base zoning districts in the Anchorage Bowl except for the Downtown (DT) Districts. (See Chapters 21.09, 21.10, and 21.11 for regulations specific to Girdwood, Chugiak-Eagle River, and the Downtown (DT) Districts, respectively.) Each of the listed uses is defined in Sections 21.05.030 through 21.05.060.

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- E. Table of Allowed Uses - Residential, Commercial, Industrial, and Other Districts

*[See Exhibit A for amendments to the Table]*

(AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO 2013-117, 12-3-13; AO No. 2013-139, § 1, 1-28-14; AO No. 2014-58, § 2(Att. A), 5-20-14; AO No. 2015-133(S), § 3(Exh. A), 2-23-16; AO No. 2015-142(S-1), § 3(Exh. B), 6-21-16; AO No. 2016-3(S), §§ 6, 7, 2-23-16; AO No. 2016-131, § 1, 11-15-16; AO No. 2016-136am, § 2, 11-15-16; AO No. 2016-156, § 1, 12-20-16; AO No. 2017-10, § 1, 1-24-17; AO No. 2017-57, § 1, 4-11-17; AO No. 2017-74, § 1, 5-23-17; AO No. 2017-176, § 4, 1-9-18; AO No. 2017-175(S), § 3(Exh. A), 2-13-18; AO No. 2020-38, § 6, 5-28-20; AO No. 2020-56, § 2, 6-23-20; AO No. 2021-54, § 1, 6-22-21; AO No. 2023-77, §§ 5, 18, 7-25-23; AO No. 2023-42, § 2, 8-22-23; AO No. 2023-87(S-1), § 2(Exh. B), 6-25-24; AO No. 2025-36, § 1, 4-16-25)

**Section 3.** Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.09.050 is hereby amended to read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set out*):

**21.09.050 Use regulations.**

A. *Table of allowed uses.* Table 21.09-2 below lists the uses allowed within the base zoning districts in Girdwood. If a use is not defined in this chapter, the definition in Chapter 21.05 shall apply. When the uses in a district are determined through a master planning process per subsections 21.09.030E. and F., this table shall not apply.

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5. *Table of Allowed Uses*

*[See Exhibit B for amendments to the Table]*

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(AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO 2013-117, 12-3-13; AO No. 2015-142(S-1), §§ 6, 7, 6-21-16; AO No. 2016-3(S), §§ 12—14, 2-23-16; AO No. 2017-68, § 1, 4-25-17; AO No. 2020-53, § 1, 6-2-20; AO No. 2021-89(S), § 16, 2-15-22; AO No. 2021-112, § 1, 3-1-22; AO No. 2022-67, § 1, 7-26-22; AO No. 2023-24, § 1, 3-21-23; AO No. 2024-24, § 7, 4-23-24; AO No. 2024-121, § 2, 1-7-25)

**Section 4.** Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.10.050 is hereby amended to read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set out*):

**21.10.050 Use regulations.**

A. *Table of Allowed Uses.* Table 21.10-4 below lists the uses allowed within the base zoning districts in Chugiak-Eagle River. Each of the listed uses is defined in Chapter 21.05. When the uses in a district are determined through a CE-PCD district this table shall not apply.

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5. *Table of Allowed Uses*

*[See Exhibit C for amendments to the Table]*

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(AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO 2013-117, 12-3-13; AO 2013-139, § 2, 1-28-14; AO No. 2014-40(S), §§ 2(Att. A), 3, 4, 5-20-14; AO No. 2014-58, § 4(Att. C), 5-20-14; AO No. 2015-133(S), § 5, 2-23-16; AO No. 2015-142(S-1), §§ 8, 9, 6-21-16; AO No. 2016-3(S), §§ 15—17, 2-23-16; AO No. 2016-54, § 1, 6-7-16; AO No. 2016-136, § 4, 11-15-16; AO No. 2017-10, § 2, 1-24-17; AO No. 2017-57, § 2, 4-1-17; AO No. 2017-160, § 6, 12-19-17; AO No. 2019-11, § 5, 2-12-19; AO No. 2021-89(S), § 17, 2-15-22; AO No. 2022-107, § 2, 2-7-23; AO No. 2023-77, § 16, 7-25-23; AO No. 2024-24, § 8, 4-23-24; AO No. 2025-41(S), § 2, 4-22-25)

**Section 5.** Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.35.020 (Old Code) is hereby amended to read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set out*):

**21.35.020 Definitions and rules of construction.**

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B. The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this title, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

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*Coverage, building* means that percentage of the total lot area covered by buildings. For the purpose of floor area ratio (FAR) calculations, building coverage excludes 100 percent of the gross floor area which is completely below grade and used exclusively for required vehicle parking and loading.

*Data Center* means facility or co-located facilities that house computer servers for processing and storing data and requires at least 20 megawatts of electrical demand at peak operation. There is minimal onsite human activity during normal operations. Accessory uses may include offices, power generation and storage, water storage and treatment, maintenance areas, vehicle and equipment parking and storage.

a. Geographically dispersed buildings, equipment, structures, and other stationary infrastructure used for the same purpose and owned or operated by the same entity may be considered single facility for the purposes of this section.

b. A facility with less than 2,000 servers shall be considered a small data center. A facility with 2,000 or more servers shall be considered a large data center.

*Density* means the number of dwelling units per gross acre in any residential development.

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(GAAB 21.05.020; AO No. 77-355; AO No. 78-16; AO No. 78-28; AO No. 78-171; AO No. 78-231; AO No. 79-214; AO No. 80-42; AO No. 81-67(S); AO No. 81-97; AO No. 81-180; AO No. 82-54; AO No. 82-167; AO No. 83-91(S); AO No. 84-14; AO No. 84-52; AO No. 85-58; AO No. 85-159; AO No. 85-91, 10-1-85; AO No. 85-216; AO No. 86-19; AO No. 86-78; AO No. 86-90; AO No. 86-171; AO No. 88-172; AO No. 88-171(S-1), 12-31-88; AO No. 89-35, 4-7-89; AO No. 88-147(S-2); AO No. 90-50(S); AO No. 91-35; AO No. 90-152(S); AO No. 91-90(S); AO No. 91-184; AO No. 92-7(S-2); AO No. 92-26; AO No. 92-93; AO No. 92-128(S); AO No. 92-129(S); AO No. 93-58; AO No. 93-148, § 1, 11-16-93; AO No. 94-62, § 2, 4-12-94; AO No. 95-68(S-1), §§ 2, 3, 8-8-95; AO No. 95-173, § 1, 11-14-95; AO No. 96-41, § 1, 3-5-96; AO No. 96-131(S), § 1, 10-22-96; AO No. 98-106, § 1, 7-21-98; AO No. 98-160, § 3, 12-8-98; AO No. 99-62, § 2, 5-11-99; AO No. 2000-119(S), § 8, 2-20-01; AO No. 2001-79(S), § 1, 5-8-01; AO No. 2001-80, § 1, 5-8-01; AO No. 2001-

101(S), § 2, 4-9-02; AO No. 2002-109, § 2, 9-10-02; AO No. 2002-117, § 4, 1-28-03; AO No. 2003-62(S-1), § 3, 10-1-03; AO No. 2003-97, § 1, 9-30-03; AO No. 2003-132, § 1, 10-7-03; AO No. 2003-124(S), § 1, 1-20-04; AO No. 2004-108(S), § 2, 10-26-04; AO No. 2005-9, § 1, 3-1-05; AO No. 2005-150(S-1), § 1, 2-28-06; AO No. 2005-185(S), § 1, 2-28-06; AO No. 2005-124(S-1A), § 4, 4-18-06; AO No. 2006-121, § 1, 9-26-06; AO No. 2006-64(S-1), § 1, 12-12-06; AO No. 2007-62, § 1, 5-15-07; AO No. 2008-80, § 1, 9-16-08; AO No. 2009-22, § 1, 4-14-09; AO No. 2010-3, § 1, 3-23-10; AO No. 2010-50(S), § 1, 8-31-10; AO No. 2011-93(S), § 1, 9-27-11; AO No. 2014-58, § 5, 5-20-14; AO No. 2016-3(S), § 20, 2-23-16; AO No. 2018-118, § 2, 1-1-19; AO No. 2020-24, § 1, 3-10-20)

**Section 6.** Anchorage Municipal Code chapter 21.40 (Old Code) is hereby amended to read as follows (*the remainder of the chapter is not affected and therefore not set out*):

**Chapter 21.40            ZONING DISTRICTS (OLD CODE - Expires December 31, 2015)<sup>[1]</sup>**

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**21.40.200    I-1 light industrial district.**

The following statement of intent and use regulations shall apply in the I-1 district:

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D. *Conditional uses.* Subject to the requirements of the conditional use standards and procedures of this title, the following uses may be permitted:

1. Mobile home parks on sites of at least ten acres in area.
2. Airstrips and heliports.
3. Planned unit developments.
4. Natural resource extraction on tracts of not less than five acres.
5. Camper parks.
6. Marquees, overpasses and similar substantial projections into public airspace, together with any signs to be mounted thereon.
7. Motels, hotels and lodging.
8. Impound yards.
9. Correctional community residential centers.
10. Motorized sports on parcels with a minimum of 20 acres, maximum engine size of 250 cc's for wheeled vehicles and 550

1 cc's for snow machines, hours of operation shall be 7:00 a.m.  
 2 to 10:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 12:00 p.m. to  
 3 10:00 p.m. on Sunday.  
 4

5 11. Public, private and parochial academic schools.

6  
 7 12. Business colleges and universities.

8  
 9 13. Type 1, 2, 3, or 4 community interest and local interest towers  
 10 that do not meet the supplementary district regulations for a  
 11 permitted or accessory use.  
 12

13 14. Dormitories.

14  
 15 15. Child care centers and child care homes.  
 16

17 16. Tower, high voltage transmission, exceeding maximum  
 18 average tower height of 70 feet. Towers exceeding the  
 19 maximum average of 70 feet in height may be replaced with a  
 20 like tower, or a shorter tower, without the requirement for a  
 21 conditional use. When a road project or other public works  
 22 project causes a utility to modify its existing facilities to  
 23 accommodate the design of the public works project, a  
 24 maximum of four structures of an existing transmission line may  
 25 be replaced with structures exceeding the maximum average  
 26 of 70 feet in height without the requirement for a conditional  
 27 use.  
 28

29 17. Two or three free-standing small wind energy conversion  
 30 systems, subject to the requirements of section 21.50.470.  
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32 18. Data centers.  
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34 \*\*\* \*\*

35 (GAAB 21.05.050.O; AO No. 77-355; AO No. 79-95; AO No. 81-67(S); AO  
 36 No. 82-105; AO No. 84-57; AO No. 85-91, 10-1-85; AO No. 85-95; AO No.  
 37 86-50; AO No. 86-90; AO No. 87-32; AO No. 88-147(S-2); AO No. 90-50(S);  
 38 AO No. 92-114; AO No. 95-68(S-1), § 11, 8-8-95; AO No. 95-76, § 1, 4-4-95;  
 39 AO No. 95-194, § 1, 1-2-96; AO No. 98-160, § 9, 12-8-98; AO No. 98-173, §  
 40 5, 11-3-98; AO No. 99-62, § 24, 5-11-99; AO No. 2001-80, § 8, 5-8-01; AO  
 41 No. 2004-5, § 1, 1-20-04; AO No. 2004-108(S), § 5, 10-26-04; AO No. 2004-  
 42 178(am), § 1, 1-25-05; AO No. 2005-9, § 3, 3-1-05; AO No. 2005-185(S), §  
 43 23, 2-28-06; AO No. 2006-64(S-1), §§ 2, 3, 12-12-06; AO No. 2007-121(S-  
 44 1), § 10, 10-23-07; AO No. 2010-3, § 8, 3-23-10; AO No. 2010-50(S), § 21,  
 45 8-31-10; AO No. 2014-58, § 12, 5-20-14; AO No. 2018-118, § 2, 1-1-19)  
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47 **21.40.210 I-2 heavy industrial district.**

48  
 49 The following statement of intent and use regulations shall apply in the I-2  
 50 district:  
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D. *Conditional uses.* Subject to the requirements of the conditional use and site plan standards and procedures of this title, the following uses may be permitted:

1. Junkyards and salvage yards.
2. Airstrips and heliports.
3. Planned unit developments.
4. Natural resource extraction on tracts of not less than five acres.
5. Uses which involve the sale or dispensing of alcoholic beverages may be permitted in accordance with section 21.50.160. Alcoholic beverage license use for a restaurant or eating place licensed by the State Alcoholic Beverages Control Board to sell beer and wine for consumption only on the licensed premises is permitted subject to the administrative site plan review standards in section 21.50.500.
6. Incinerator facilities and thermal desorption units.
7. Type 1, 2, 3, or 4 community interest and local interest towers that do not meet the supplementary district regulations for a permitted or accessory use.
8. Tower, high voltage transmission, exceeding maximum average tower height of 70 feet. Towers exceeding the maximum average of 70 feet in height may be replaced with a like tower, or a shorter tower, without the requirement for a conditional use. When a road project or other public works project causes a utility to modify its existing facilities to accommodate the design of the public works project, a maximum of four structures of an existing transmission line may be replaced with structures exceeding the maximum average of 70 feet in height without the requirement for a conditional use.
9. Two or three free-standing small wind energy conversion systems, subject to the requirements of section 21.50.470.
10. Utility wind energy conversion systems, subject to the requirements of section 21.50.480.

11. Data centers.

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(GAAB 21.05.050.P; AO No. 77-355; AO No. 85-91, 10-1-85; AO No. 87-32; AO No. 91-184; AO No. 93-148, § 4, 11-16-93; AO No. 96-60, § 1, 8-6-96; AO No. 96-125, § 1, 11-12-96; AO No. 97-78, § 2, 6-3-97; AO No. 99-62, §

25, 5-11-99; AO No. 2001-80, § 9, 5-8-01; AO No. 2005-185(S), § 24, 2-28-06; AO No. 2005-124(S-1A), § 26, 4-18-06; AO No. 2006-64(S-1), §§ 2, 3, 12-12-06; AO No. 2007-121(S-1), § 11, 10-23-07; AO No. 2010-50(S), § 22, 8-31-10)

**21.40.220 I-3 rural industrial district.**

The following statement of intent and use regulations shall apply in the I-3 district:

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D. *Conditional uses.* Subject to the requirements of the conditional use provisions of this title, the following uses may be permitted:

1. Junkyards and salvage yards.
2. Airports and heliports.
3. Planned unit developments.
4. Tanning, curing, processing or storing of raw hides and skins.
5. Natural resource extraction on tracts of not less than five acres.
6. Type 1, 2, 3, or 4 community interest and local interest towers that do not meet the supplementary district regulations for a permitted or accessory use.
7. Tower, high voltage transmission, exceeding maximum average tower height of 70 feet. Towers exceeding the maximum average of 70 feet in height may be replaced with a like tower, or a shorter tower, without the requirement for a conditional use. When a road project or other public works project causes a utility to modify its existing facilities to accommodate the design of the public works project, a maximum of four structures of an existing transmission line may be replaced with structures exceeding the maximum average of 70 feet in height without the requirement for a conditional use.

8. Data centers.

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(GAAB 21.05.050.Q; AO No. 77-355; AO No. 85-91, 10-1-85; AO No. 87-32; AO No. 93-148, § 2, 11-16-93; AO No. 99-62, § 26, 5-11-99; AO No. 2001-80, § 10, 5-8-01; AO No. 2005-185(S), § 25, 2-28-06; AO No. 2005-124(S-1A), § 27, 4-18-06; AO No. 2006-64(S-1), §§ 2, 3, 12-12-06)

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**Section 7.** Anchorage Municipal Code chapter 21.50 (Old Code) is hereby amended insert a new section 21.50.515 (*requiring no legislative drafting*):

**21.50.515 Conditional use standards – Data centers.**

The following standards shall apply to data centers:

- A. *Design standards.* A data center facility must be designed to minimize adverse visual impacts on surrounding development as demonstrated by the submission of elevations, architectural sketches, or sight line studies.
1. Designs shall provide visual screening and reduce noise levels, any equipment necessary for cooling, ventilating, or otherwise operating the facility, including power generators or other power supply equipment, must be fully enclosed, except where determined by the Director not to be mechanically feasible based on the manufacturer specifications.
  2. If the Director determines it is not mechanically feasible to fully enclose the equipment, it must be screened by a wall or similar barrier. In addition, any equipment as referenced above that is located on the ground and any accessory electrical substation must be screened from view from abutting lots and from rights-of-way by a visually solid wall or a building. This standard does not apply to solar panels.”
  3. A data center facility must include a main entrance feature that is differentiated from the remainder of the building façade by a change in building material, pattern, texture, color, or accent material. The entrance feature must also either project or recess from the adjoining building plane.
- B. *Landscaping.* If the specific development is considered a large data center, L3 screening landscaping is required where adjacent to residential zones. Otherwise, L2 buffer landscaping is required where adjacent to residential zones. The planning and zoning commission, through the conditional use review, may require additional screening.
- C. *Setbacks.* Where the property is adjacent to residential or any other sound-sensitive use, a data center facility or ancillary equipment must be located at least 200 feet from the residential or noise-sensitive use. The Director may waive this requirement only for small data centers.
- D. *Additional submittal requirements for a conditional use permit.*
1. Completion of a noise mitigation study for projected operational noise levels, including at peak operation, demonstrating that the operation of the data center will not exceed the standards stated in AMC subsection 15.70.080A.

- 1 a. The study must include consideration of sound source  
2 location and directivity, and barrier effects of buildings  
3 and topography, for all proposed development on a lot  
4 or site plan.  
5
- 6 b. If the development will be completed in phases, the  
7 study must address both the proposed phase and the  
8 ultimate buildout of the proposed development.  
9
- 10 2. If the facility requires connecting to and drawing power from the  
11 surrounding electrical grid, the application must include a  
12 written statement from the electrical utility or utilities  
13 demonstrating that there is sufficient system capacity to meet  
14 the facility's projected demand at peak operation. The project  
15 application shall document estimated electrical demand at peak  
16 operation.  
17
- 18 3. If the facility requires connecting to the public water system, the  
19 application must include a written statement from the water  
20 utility that there is sufficient water at adequate pressure to meet  
21 the facility's projected daily water demand at peak operation.  
22 The project application shall include all information the water  
23 utility deems necessary to make these determinations. The  
24 water utility may write that sufficient water quantity and  
25 pressure may be made available through privately constructed  
26 and funded upgrades to the water system, the construction of  
27 which shall be a condition on the land use permit.  
28
- 29 4. If the facility will discharge wastewater into the public sewage  
30 system, the application must include a written statement from  
31 the wastewater utility that there is adequate capacity in the  
32 sewer system for the facility's discharge at peak operation and  
33 that the applicant has provided the wastewater utility with  
34 reliable information adequate for the wastewater utility to  
35 determine the facility's ability to comply with the Clean Water  
36 Act (33 U.S.C. Sec. 1251 et seq. (1972)), title 26 of this Code,  
37 and all other applicable laws and regulations. The project  
38 application shall include all information the wastewater utility  
39 deems necessary to make these determinations. In its written  
40 statement, the wastewater utility may state, additionally or  
41 alternatively to concluding that sufficient capacity exists in the  
42 sewer system,:  
43
- 44 a. That sufficient sewer capacity may be achieved through  
45 privately constructed and funded upgrades to the public  
46 sewer system, the construction of which shall be a  
47 condition on the land use permit, or  
48
- 49 b. That based on the information provided by the applicant,  
50 the project's discharge is likely to result in significant  
51 adverse impacts on the public sewer system or human

health. Such a statement by the wastewater utility creates a presumption that the approval criterion at 21.03.080D.7 is not met. This presumption may only be overcome by clear and convincing evidence presented to the commission.

- 5. If the facility utilizes an onsite water and wastewater system, the application must demonstrate that the project complies with all applicable Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation requirements.
- 6. Evidence of adequate fire detection and suppression systems at the facility, including for any onsite power generation and storage infrastructure.
- 7. Documentation of anticipated onsite power generation including energy source(s) and whether any power generated at the facility in excess of its operational need may be returned to the grid, water recycling, reclamation of waste heat, treatment of contaminants, and any other strategies to prevent, reduce, or mitigate potential impacts of the facility on the surrounding community.

**Section 8.** The Assembly requests the Planning Department on other communities' use standards and mitigation of impacts of energy-intensive data facilities, and recommend any revised or additional land use regulations such as overlay districts, special land use permits, or revised use standards in a brief report to the Planning and Zoning Commission, Mayor and Assembly via AIM.

**Section 9.** Pursuant to AMC subsection 21.03.210C., this ordinance shall not require planning and zoning commission review prior to assembly action, and the 21-day published notice requirement of AMC subsection 21.03.020H.4. is waived; this ordinance shall comply with charter § 10.01(b) notice requirements.

**Section 10.** This ordinance shall be effective immediately upon passage and approval by the Assembly.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Assembly this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.

Chair \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Municipal Clerk

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