



Staff Overview: Background, Purpose of Group, and Planning Considerations

Data Center Draft Ordinance Planning Commission Public Hearing

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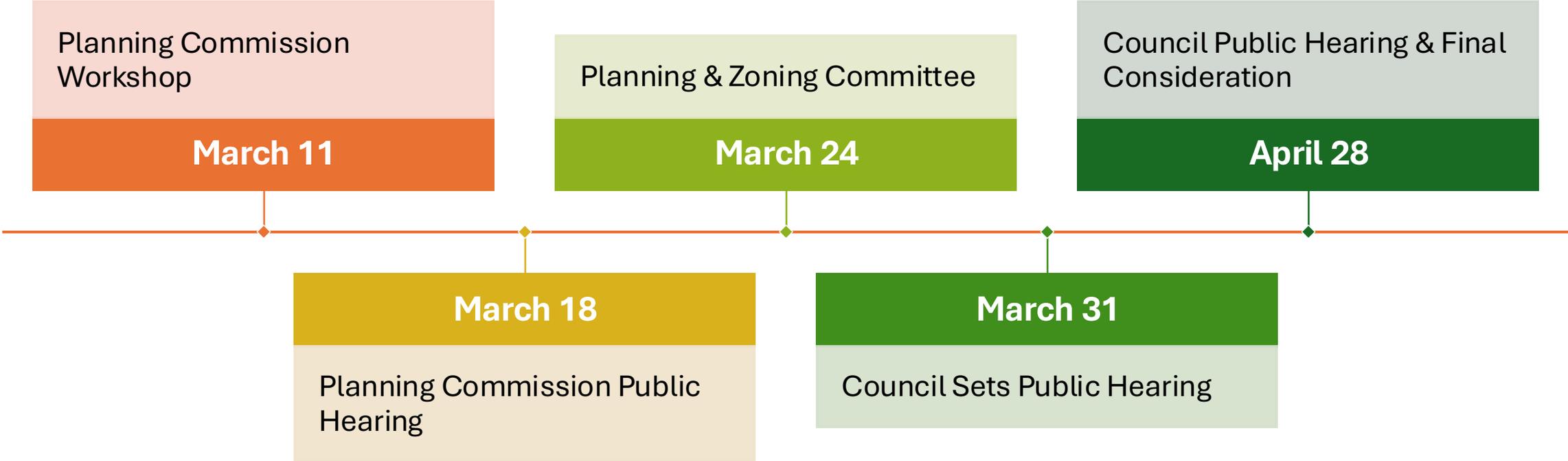
City of Birmingham
Department of Planning, Engineering and Permits
Mayor's Office of Resilience and Sustainability



Background

- Due to the explosive growth of Data Centers nationally the City has recognized the need to develop definitions and ordinance modifications to ensure all scales of Data Center are compatible with surrounding uses.
 - City adopted a 6-month temporary suspension on new Data Center Development on March 3, 2026 while ordinance is being developed.
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Tentative Land Use Policy Adoption Timeline



What is a Data Center

- Catch all term for facilities that house computer servers and IT infrastructure.
- Operate 24 hours a day
- Require specialized power, cooling, and water systems.
- Often resemble warehouses but function very differently.



Why do this now?

Data Center development has evolved rapidly in scale and intensity.

Emerging Facilities differ significantly from what existing ordinance and plans anticipated.

Birmingham is an attractive destination for Data Centers due to grid reliability, industrial infrastructure, cost of land and other factors.

Enterprise style data center



Hyperscale style data center



Existing data centers have been considerably smaller in scale

- Local examples today are around 5 MW
- Deemed compatible with other commercial or office uses
- Emerging data centers are often between 200 MW and up to 1200 MW – closer to industrial scale uses.





New "Hyperscale" Data Centers are growing at a tremendous rate nationally

- Some with considerable community pushback or controversy
- In worst case scenarios communities have experienced decreased air quality, lowered property values and increased energy bills.

**Meta AI
Newton Co, GA**



Key Revisions based on stakeholder feedback.

- Adjusted and reduced some setback requirements for medium and hyperscale to better align with zoning category.
 - Adjusted portions of water and on-site power generation conditions to remove potential loopholes.
 - Added lighting conditions.
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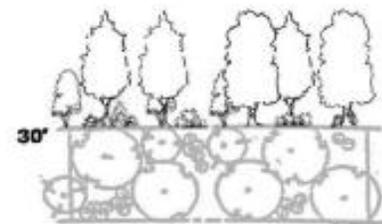


Proposed amendments overview: Hyperscale

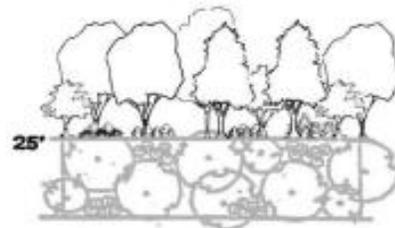


Landscape Buffer "C"

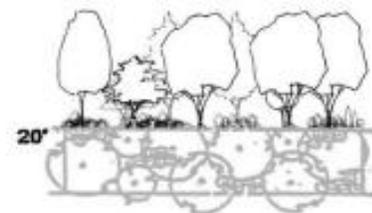
C-1
4.8 CANOPY
2.4 UNDERSTORY
19 SHRUBS



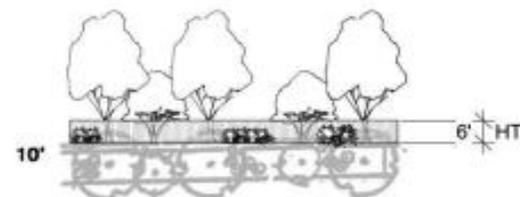
C-2
5.4 CANOPY
2.7 UNDERSTORY
22 SHRUBS



C-3
6 CANOPY
3 UNDERSTORY
24 SHRUBS



C-4
6' OPAQUE FENCE
3 CANOPY
2 UNDERSTORY
10 SHRUBS





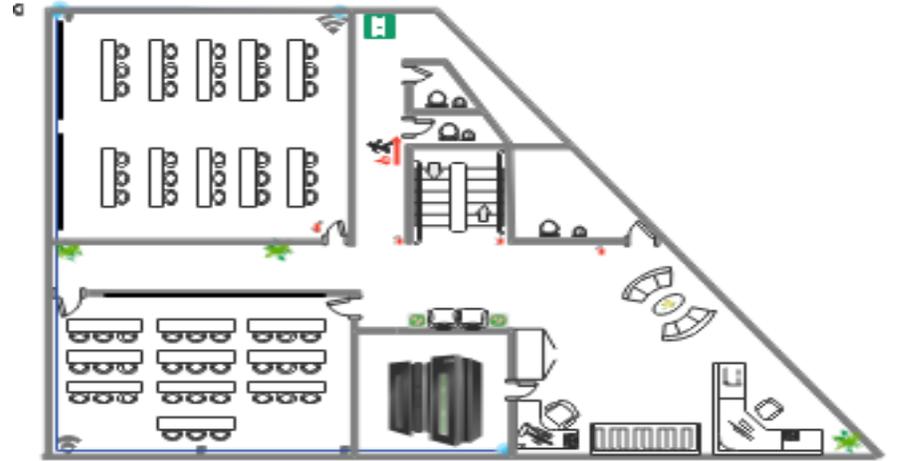
Proposed amendments overview: Medium



Proposed amendments overview: Micro



Proposed amendments overview: Accessory





Proposed amendments overview: Fiber Hut





Thank you!

- Q&A
 - Public Comment
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