

ORDINANCE
By Chowdhury and Chavez
Revised as Introduced – May 21, 2026

Amending Title 21 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances by adding a new Chapter 597 to Interim Ordinances: Providing for a moratorium on the establishment, re-establishment, or expansion of data centers.

The City Council of the City of Minneapolis do ordain as follows:

Section 1. That the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances be amended by adding thereto a new Chapter 597 to read as follows:

**CHAPTER 597. PROVIDING FOR A MORATORIUM ON THE ESTABLISHMENT,
RE-ESTABLISHMENT, OR EXPANSION OF DATA CENTERS**

597.10. Authority. Pursuant to Minn. Statutes section 462.355, subd. 4, the city is authorized to establish interim ordinances to regulate, restrict, or prohibit any use or development in all or a part of the city while the city or its planning department is conducting studies, or has authorized a study to be conducted, or has scheduled a hearing to consider adoption or amendment of the comprehensive plan or official zoning controls. In furtherance of this statutory authority, the city has enacted Chapter 529, Article VII, of the zoning code, which governs the establishment of interim ordinances. The city declares that this interim ordinance is established pursuant to this statutory and local ordinance authority.

597.20. Findings and purpose. The city council is concerned about potentially unknown or adverse impacts that the increased siting, development, re-development or expansion of data center facilities might have on the city as a whole and the neighborhoods and zoning districts in which such uses are located. The city's official controls do not currently define data centers as a separate use category although the prevalence of such facilities is expanding on a national, regional, and local basis. The city, through its planning department, has been studying potential amendments to its official controls in this area, including its zoning code, and desires to enact this interim ordinance to allow for the continuation and completion of this study to inform regulation of future uses of this type. The city finds that this interim ordinance should be adopted to protect the planning process and the health, safety and welfare of the citizens.

597.30. Study. (a) The department of community planning and economic development, in cooperation with other applicable city departments, is hereby authorized to conduct a study to evaluate the impact of data centers on communities citywide and to propose such amendments to the city's official controls and other regulatory devices that the department deems necessary and advisable in furtherance of the city's policy objectives.

(b) The study area consists of the entire city.

(c) The department of community planning and economic development shall return to the appropriate committee of the city council to present a progress report in no more than six (6) months' time.

597.40. Definition and restrictions. (a) For purposes of this chapter, the term “data center” shall mean a principal use, consisting of new or expanded space, where the primary function is to house computers and/or related equipment for the purpose of collection, processing, storage, or retrieval of data.

(b) From the date of introduction of this ordinance on May 21, 2026, through and including November 21, 2026, or upon completion of the study and adoption or amendment of the official controls affecting the subject matter of this interim ordinance, whichever occurs first, throughout the city of Minneapolis, no data center facility shall be established, re-established, or expanded. No zoning approval, building permit, construction permit, demolition permit, or administrative waiver for the establishment, re-establishment, or expansion of any data center facility shall be allowed or granted by any city department.

(c) The restriction imposed by this section shall not apply to data centers consisting of less than three-hundred fifty thousand (350,000) square feet of new or expanded space located in the downtown area bounded by Interstate 35W, Interstate 94, Plymouth Avenue, and the Mississippi River.

Consistent with section 525.830, these restrictions shall apply only to the issuance of permits for development for which an application has not been filed prior to the effective date of this interim ordinance.

597.50. Hardship. In cases of hardship, any person having a legal or equitable interest in land and aggrieved by the requirements of this interim ordinance may apply to the city council for a waiver of all or a portion of the applicable restrictions as provided in Chapter 525, Article VII, of the zoning code. A waiver may be granted where the city council finds substantial hardship caused by the restrictions and finds that the waiver will not unduly affect the integrity of the planning process or the purposes for which the interim ordinance is enacted.