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TO: Detroit City Council

FROM: David Whitaker, Director
Legislative Policy Division

DATE: March 6, 2026

RE: Resolution Urging Administration to Implement a Moratorium on Data Centers

The Legislative Policy Division (LPD) has been requested by Council Member Scott Benson to draft a resolution urging the Administration to implement a moratorium on data centers in the city of Detroit. LPD submits the attached resolution for City Council's consideration.

If we can be of further assistance, please call upon us.

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**RESOLUTION URGING THE MAYOR TO IMPLEMENT
A TWO YEAR MORATORIUMON ON DATA CENTER DEVELOPMENT**

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BY COUNCIL MEMBER SCOTT BENSON

WHEREAS, It is incumbent upon those elected to serve the citizens of the City of Detroit to expend maximum efforts to protect the public peace, health and safety of all its constituents; and

WHEREAS, Recent events surrounding the development of data centers in Michigan and across the United States has produced legitimate concerns regarding their unique resource-intensive utilization of energy and natural resources combined with the exasperation of environmental risk; and

WHEREAS, Quest Technology Management[1] defines the data centers as:

> [a] physical facility that houses computing infrastructure, including servers, storage devices, networking equipment, and other systems necessary for managing and storing data. It is the central hub for processing, transmitting, and safeguarding critical information for businesses, governments, and other organizations. Data centers are at the heart of digital operations, helping companies enable cloud services, run e-commerce platforms, or support financial systems.

WHEREAS, Data centers come in a variety of types (Enterprise Data Centers, Co-Location Data Centers, Cloud Data Centers, Edge Data Centers, and Hyperscale Data Centers) and in addition to different types, data centers also have different classifications based on their design, reliability, and redundancy capabilities. The Tier Classification System, developed by the Uptime Institute[2], is the most widely used framework for assessing a data center's capabilities and performance. The classifications are Tier I- Basic Capacity; Tier II- Redundant Capacity Components; Tier III- Concurrently Maintainable; and Tier IV-Fault Tolerant; and

WHEREAS, According to a story in US Today[3], "The majority of the concerns have been due to environmental issues or surging utility costs. Artificial intelligence data centers require more resources and power than a typical data center… In 2025, 25 data center projects were canceled in the United States, compared to eight in 2024 and 2023 combined. The advocacy against data centers has seen 14 states issue moratoriums (a temporary ban) within respective local communities, according to Tech Policy Press."; and

WHEREAS, The Detroit News reports "There are 2,717 operational data centers in the U.S. and 35 in Michigan, according to an analysis by João Ferreira, a regional economist for the University of Virginia's Welden Cooper Center for Public Service… Great Lakes states are home to approximately 20% of the nation's data centers. Michigan has the least number of data centers in the region, Ferreira said. Illinois and Ohio have the most data centers in the region and are attracting the most data center development"[4]; and

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[1] The Basics of Data Centers: What You Need to Know | Quest Technology Management
[2] Uptime Institute Tier Classification System - Uptime Institute
[3] What are data centers? Breaking down the growth, concerns and pushback
[4] The Detroit News 12-02-25 Q&A: What to know about data centers

WHEREAS, It is necessary and prudent that the City of Detroit obtain a full understanding of the types, categories, energy usage, public health, infrastructure and environmental concerns of data centers prior to their development in the city of Detroit; and

WHEREAS, The City of Detroit needs the time required to conduct a comprehensive study of the "best practices" for the implementation of data centers. The Detroit City Council believes a two-year moratorium should be enacted to allow the time to obtain a study to address the following:

- Grid Stability
- Water Consumption
- Noise Pollution
- Economic Impact vs, Land Use

This would provide the time for the City of Detroit to be able to create the appropriate policies and regulations necessary to protect the health, safety and general welfare of its residents; **BE IT THERFORE**

RESOLVED, That the Detroit City Council urges Mayor Mary Sheffield to enact a two-year moratorium on the development of any Data Centers within the city of Detroit proper while a comprehensive study of the "best practices" be conducted to address the following:

- Grid Stability
- Water Consumption
- Noise Pollution
- Economic Impact vs, Land Use

And **BE IT FINALLY**

RESOLVED, That the Mayor's Office and relevant departments (including Building Safety, Engineering and Environmental Department and Planning and Development) refrain from issuing any new data center permits for the two-year moratorium period.