

February 6, 2025

Reno Planning Commission Meeting

Cathy Fulkerson
990 Sonora Drive
Reno, NV 89509

Re: Public Comment on Requirements for Data Centers

Commissioners and City Council Members,

I am Cathy Fulkerson, Facilitator of Third Act Nevada, a national organization empowering seniors to protect the planet. I was born and raised in Reno and support yesterday's Reno Planning Commission resolution that recommends the Reno City Council adopt a temporary pause in permitting data centers in order to study their impact and develop new regulations. I'm here today to bring this to your attention and urge your collaboration with each other and with the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Commission to work together to develop a region-wide, comprehensive policy to regulate high-energy users such as data centers.

Data centers are already here in Nevada and across the nation. The use of data centers and AI is becoming more and more integrated into our daily lives.

Data centers typically demand huge amounts of energy to operate and require either additional energy or large quantities of water for cooling systems and have been described as thermal dissipation centers.

The infrastructure costs to generate and deliver that energy are currently borne by Nevada ratepayers. A recently approved data center in Reno will demand an energy load of 30MW – this is comparable to the total output of the Steamboat Geothermal Power Station. Nevada ratepayers will pay for the design, construction, operation and delivery of something equivalent to Steamboat in order to generate enough energy to meet the demand for this one data center as well as for any costs of any wildfires started by power transmission.

Low-income Nevadans already carry severe energy burdens, and unless data centers and other high energy users, such as cryptocurrency mines, are required to carry their full energy costs in a sustainable manner, each one will negatively impact the region's quality of life.

Data centers must be directly tied to Master Plans and sustainability goals, must be required to supply their own sustainable energy and must conserve as much water as is possible. Otherwise, Nevadans will pay for increasing energy rate hikes, will experience increasing power shut offs because of grid demand and wildfire prevention, and will feel the increasing effects of climate change.

For all of these reasons, I **urge you to consider pausing anymore development of data centers until a collaborative, regional approach to regulation is developed**. Thank you for your service to the community today in discussing a collaborative regional emergency management process.

2-6-25

Concurrent

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Cathy Fulkerson

Footnote:

- a) A 2024 [Energy Burden Report](#) by the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy found that 25% of low-income renters and homeowners in Las Vegas carried severe energy burdens, defined as paying 10% or more of their household income toward energy bills. That's up from their 2020 study that found 25% of low-income households in Vegas carrying a high energy burden, defined as paying 6% or more toward energy needs. In four years, low-income households in Las Vegas shifted from carrying a high energy burden to carrying a severe energy burden.