ORDINANCE

July 8, 2025
Town Council
Public Hearing
Ordinance 2025-10

AN ORDINANCE TO APPROVE ZOTA-25-1 A ZONING ORDINANCE TEXT AMENDMENT TO ARTICLES 3, 9 AND 12 TO REMOVE DATA CENTERS AS A PERMISSIBLE USE WITHIN THE INDUSTRIAL ZONING DISTRICT

WHEREAS, Warrenton, VA (Hereinafter "the Town") is a municipal corporation located within the County of Fauquier; and

WHEREAS, the Warrenton Town Council (Hereinafter "Council") may, by ordinance, amend, supplement, or change the regulations of the Zoning Ordinance of the Town whenever the public necessity, convenience, general welfare or good zoning practice may require such an amendment; and

WHEREAS, such an amendment may be initiated by resolution of Council in accord with the procedures and requirements of Section 11-3.9 of the Zoning Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, on August 10, 2021, Council approved a Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment to Articles 3, 9 and 12, case number ZNG 2021-0321, to add Data Centers as a Permissible Use within the Industrial District with the approval of a Special Use Permit by Council; and

WHEREAS, Council now finds that a Data Center is a Use that does not further the health, safety and welfare of the public, nor does a Data Center Use promote public necessity or public convenience within the Town of Warrenton; and

WHEREAS, the Warrenton Planning Commission held a public hearing on this matter on May 20, 2025, and issued a recommendation to approve the proposed text amendment by a vote of four to approve, one to deny; and

WHEREAS, on July 8, 2025, the Warrenton Town Council conducted a public hearing on this matter and considered oral and written testimony; and

WHEREAS, the Warrenton Town Council finds that per the Code of Virginia §15.2-2286(A)(7) this text amendment is in the best interest of public necessity, convenience, general welfare, and good zoning practice; now, therefore, be it

ORDAINED, by the Warrenton Town Council this 8th day of July 2025, that the Town Council hereby adopts the following text amendment to Articles 3, 9 and 12 of the Town of Warrenton Zoning Ordinance as set forth herein.

Votes:
Ayes: Mr. Roy Francis; Mr. William Semple; Mr. Larry Kovalik; Ms. Michele O'Halloran; Mr. Eric Gagnon; Mr. Paul Mooney.
Nays:
Absent from Meeting: Mr. David McGuire.

For Information:
Community Development Director,
Town Attorney

ATTEST: _____
Town Recorder

Article 3 Zoning Districts and Map

Amended by Town Council: March 11, 2008
February 12, 2013
April 12, 2016
June 14, 2016
August 9, 2016
December 11, 2018
August 11, 2020
August 10, 2021
April 12, 2022
September 13, 2022
July 8, 2025

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3-1 Zoning Districts Established
3-1.1 Base Districts
3-1.2 Overlay Districts

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3-3 Zoning District Boundaries
3-4 Requirements for Base Zoning Districts
3-4.1 R-15 Residential District
3-4.2 R-10 Residential District
3-4.3 R-6 Residential District
3-4.4 RT Residential Townhouse District
3-4.5 RMF Residential Multifamily District
3-4.6 R-40 Residential District
3-4.7 R-E Residential District
3-4.8 RO Residential Office District
3-4.9 PSP Public-Semi-Public Institutional District
3-4.10 C Commercial District
3-4.11 CBD Central Business District
3-4.12 I Industrial District

3-5 Requirements for Overlay Zoning Districts
3-5.1 FPD - Floodplain District
3-5.2 PUD - Planned Unit Development District
3-5.3 HD - Historic District

3-4.12 I Industrial District

3-4.12.3 Permissible Uses (by special use permit upon approval of the Town Council)

- Automobile body shop
- Automobile and truck repair and service
- Commercial Kennels
- Contractor's storage yard
- ~~Data Center~~
- Farm equipment, motorcycle, boat and sport trailer sales and service
- Fuel, coal, oil distribution storage yards
- Lumber and building supply with undercover storage.
- Maintenance and equipment shops with screened outside storage
- Outdoor storage of any kind
- Plumbing and electrical supply with undercover storage
- Restaurant or cafeteria, drive-thru or otherwise
- Self-service mini-warehouse
- Temporary fair and show grounds
- Tire and battery sales and service, tire recapping and retreading
- Transmission and receiving towers of height greater than one hundred twenty-five (125) feet.
- Treatment plants, water storage tanks, major transmission lines or pipelines, pumping or regulator stations, communications towers, storage yards and substations, and cable television facilities and accessory buildings

Article 9 Supplemental Use Regulations

Amended by Town Council: **February 12, 2013**
July 8, 2014
August 9, 2016
December 11, 2018
April 9, 2019
December 10, 2019
August 10, 2021
April 12, 2022
June 11, 2024
July 8, 2025

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9-26 Data Centers

Data Centers, as defined in Article 12, are permissible in the Industrial (I) District, subject to the following requirements.

9-26.1 Additional Standards

A. Minimum Lot Size: 25 acres. Town Council may approve a data center on parcels less than 25 acres as part of the special use permit application.

B. The data center shall utilize recycled water or air chillers, in conjunction with using recycled water, for cooling purposes. Potable water shall not be used for cooling.

C. All electric service lines from the substation to the data center shall be placed underground.

D. Setbacks: Per Section 3-4.12.4 ("All principal manufacturing and processing uses in industrial parks").

1. Town Council may approve building heights greater than 35 feet during the review of the Special Use Permit. Buildings must be setback one (1) additional foot (horizontally) from the required setback line for each additional one (1) foot (vertically) greater than 35 feet. Building heights shall be in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.

2. The data center building shall be setback a minimum of one-hundred (100) feet from property lines.

E. Parking: In accordance with "Assembly or Manufacturing Uses" per Section 7-7 of the Zoning Ordinance.

F. Building Facades:

1. Building facades shall include at least two of the following design elements:

a. Change in building height;
b. Building step-backs or recesses;
c. Fenestration (25% minimum);
d. Change in building material, pattern, texture, or color;
e. Use of accent materials.

~~G. Mechanical Equipment:~~

~~1. Mechanical equipment shall be completely screened through the use of walls, fences or evergreen vegetation so that no part of the mechanical equipment can be seen from adjoining properties or right-of-ways.~~

~~2. All generators shall be equipped with mufflers to reduce emissions and noise.~~

~~H. Security:~~

~~1. The facility shall provide access to Town and County emergency services staff at all times.~~

~~I. Landscaping:~~

~~1. In addition to the landscape planting requirements of Article 8 of the Zoning Ordinance, any portion of the data center (including equipment) visible from a park or adjoining/across the street from a residential district shall be screened by vegetation consisting of a double staggered row of evergreen trees planted 15 feet on center. A minimum 3 foot berm planted with a double staggered row of evergreen shrubs planted 10 feet on center may be used in place of the double staggered row of evergreen trees required above.~~

~~J. Substations:~~

~~1. Substations associated with the data center shall be screened from adjacent properties and right-of-ways through the use of opaque fencing in addition to evergreen trees and shrubs.~~

Article 12 Definitions

Amended by Town Council: **February 12, 2013**
June 14, 2016
August 9, 2016
December 11, 2018
April 9, 2019
September 10, 2019
December 10, 2019
March 10, 2020
December 13, 2020
August 10, 2021
April 12, 2022
July 8, 2025

For the purpose of this Ordinance, certain words and terms are used in a limited or special sense as defined herein. Words used in the present tense include the future; the singular number includes plural and the plural singular; the word "structure" includes "building"; the word "used" includes arranges, designed, constructed, altered, converted, rented, leased, or intended to be used; and the word "shall" is mandatory and directory.

Any word, term or phrase used in this ordinance not defined below shall have the meaning ascribed to the word in the most recent edition of Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, unless in the opinion of the Zoning Administrator, established customs or practices of the Town of Warrenton justify a different or additional meaning.

A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | R | S | T | U | V | W | Y | Z

~~**Data Center:** A facility containing one or more large-scale computer systems used for data storage and processing for off-site users. Typical supporting equipment includes back-up batteries and power generators, electric substations, cooling units, fire suppression systems, and enhanced security features.~~