ORDINANCE NUMBER 25-07

ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF COLUMBIA COUNTY, GEORGIA AMENDING CHAPTER 90, ZONING, ARTICLE III, COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, PROFESSIONAL, SPECIAL, PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT, AND PLANNED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS, SECTIONS 90-97 *ALLOWED USES*, 90-98 *LIST OF LOT AND STRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS* AND CHAPTER 90, ARTICLE IV SUPPLEMENTAL REQUIREMENTS, SECTIONS 90-139 *BUFFERS AND SCREENING*, AND 90-147 *USE PROVISIONS* AND ESTABLISHING CHAPTER 90, ZONING, ARTICLE III, COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, PROFESSIONAL, SPECIAL, PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT, AND PLANNED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS, SECTION 90-101 *D-C DATA CENTER DISTRICT*; REPEALING ANY CONFLICTING ORDINANCES AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE

THIS ORDINANCE adopted by the Board of Commissioners of Columbia County, Georgia (the "Board").

WHEREAS, the Board desires to clarify certain provisions of the Columbia County Code of Ordinances pertaining to data center development and establish requirements for their construction, and

WHEREAS, the Board desires to adopt provisions that protect the integrity and character of the County's natural environment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Board and it is hereby ordained by the authority of the same as follows:

Section 1. Amendment of Chapter 90 Zoning. Article III, Commercial, Industrial, Professional, Special, Planned Unit Development, and Planned Development Districts and Article IV Supplemental Requirements, Sections 90-97 *Allowed uses*, 90-98 *List of lot and structure requirements*, 90-139 *Buffers & screening*, 90-147 *Use provisions*, is hereby modified pertaining to data center development as attached in Exhibit "A" and made a part hereof.

Section 2. Creation of Section 90-101. Chapter 90 Zoning, Article III, Commercial, Industrial, Professional, Special, Planned Unit Development, and Planned Development Districts and Article IV Supplemental Requirements is amended to include the establishment of Section 90-101 *D-C Data center district* pertaining to data center development as attached in Exhibit "B" and made a part hereof.

Section 3. Repeal of Conflicting Ordinances. Any Ordinances in conflict with this Ordinance shall be repealed to the extent necessary to eliminate such conflict.

Section 4. Effective Date. This Ordinance shall become effective upon the date of its adoption following the second reading of the Ordinance.

ADOPTED, this 2nd day of December, 2025.

Board of Commissioners of Columbia County, Georgia

Attest: _____
Patrice R. Crawley, Clerk

By: _____
Douglas R. Duncan, Jr., Chairman

Sec. 90-97. Allowed uses.

(a) *Use table.*

(1) Allowed use (A). Indicates a use is allowed in the respective district. The use is also subject to all other applicable requirements of the code.

(2) Limited use (L). Indicates a use is allowed in the respective district, subject to a use standard found in the right-hand column of the use table. The use is also subject to all other applicable requirements of the code.

(3) Conditional use (C). Indicates a use may be allowed in the respective district only where approved by the board of commissioners in accordance with section 90-180.

(4) Use not allowed. A blank cell indicates that a use is not allowed in the respective district.

Use Category	Commercial and Industrial										Definition/ Standards
Specific Use	C-1	C-C	C-2	C-3	P-1	PDD	M-1	M-2	S-1	D-C	
Agricultural Uses											
All agriculture, except as listed below:									C		90-147(d)
Barn, pole barn, storage structure											90-147(d)(3)
Small-scale agriculture									C		90-147(d)(4)
Timber harvesting											90-147(d)(5)
Residential Uses											
All household living, as listed below:											90-147(e)
Single-family detached	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C		90-147(e)(1)b.
Two-family									C		90-147(e)(1)c.
Townhouse									C		90-147(e)(1)d.
Multi-family	C	C	C						C		90-147(e)(1)e.
Manufactured home, single-wide									C		90-147(d)(1)f.
Manufactured home, double-wide									C		90-147(e)(1)f.
Manufactured home park									C		90-147(e)(1)g.
Tiny house									C		90-147(e)(1)h.
Tiny house community									C		90-147(e)(1)i
All group living, as listed below:											90-147(2)
Continuing care retirement community									C		90-147(e)(2)b.
Group home											90-147(e)(2)c.
Hospice	C	A	A		C	C			C		90-147(e)(2)d.
Institutional residential (up to 18 residents)	A	A	A		A	A			C		90-147(e)(2)e.
Institutional residential (more than 18 residents)	C	A	A		C	C			C		90-147(e)(2)e.
Monastery, convent									C		90-147(e)(2)f.
All social service and educational			C						C		90-147(e)(3)

Public/Institutional Uses											
All civic, as listed below:											90-147(f)(1)
College, university	C	A	A	A	C	C	C	C	C		90-147(f)(1)b.
Club or lodge, nonprofit	A	A	A	A	A	A	C	C	C		90-147(f)(1)c.
Museum, library	A	A	A	A	A	A			C		90-147(f)(1)d.
Nonprofit service organization	A	A	A	A	A	A	C	C	C		90-147(f)(1)e.
Place of worship	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C		90-147(f)(1)f.
Public use	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	C		90-147(f)(1)g.
School, private (K—12)	C	A	A	A	C	C	C	C	C		90-147(f)(1)h.
School, special	C	A	A	A	C	C	C	C	C		90-147(f)(1)i.
All parks and open space, as listed below:											90-147(f)(2)
Cemetery									C		90-147(f)(2)b.
Community recreation	L	L	L						C		90-147(f)(2)c.
Conservation area	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A		90-147(f)(2)d.
Golf course									C		90-147(f)(2)e.
Reservoir, water supply, water well	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A		90-147(f)(2)g.
All major utilities, except as listed below:							C	C	C	A	90-147(f)(3)
Telecommunication tower									C	C	90-147(f)(3)b.
All minor utilities	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	C	L	90-147(f)(4)
Commercial Uses											
All day care, as listed below:											90-147(g)(1)
Adult care center (fewer than 7 aging adults)	A	A	A		A	A			C		90-147(g)(1)b.
Adult care center (7 or more aging adults)	A	A	A						C		90-147(g)(1)b.
Day care center (fewer than 7 children)	L	A	A		L	L			C		90-147(g)(1)c.
Day care center (7 or more children)	L	A	A		C	C			C		90-147(g)(1)c.
All indoor recreation, except as listed below:		A	A	A			C		C		90-147(g)(2)
Adult business								C			90-147(g)(2)b.
Gym, health spa, yoga studio	L	A	A	A	L	L	C	C	C		90-147(g)(2)c.
School of the arts	A	A	A	A	A	A	C	C	C		90-147(g)(2)d.
Firearm training and sports facility			C	C			C	C	C		90-147(g)(2)e.
Special event facility	C	A	A	C	C	C	C	C	C		90-147(g)(2)f.
All medical, except as listed below:	A	A	A		A	A			C		90-147(g)(3)
Social service, medical									C		90-147(g)(3)b.
All office, except as listed below:	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	C		90-147(g)(4)
Bail bonds			A	A			C	C	C		90-147(g)(4)c.

Call center	C	A	A	A	C	C	C	C	C		90-147(g)(4)d.
Radio, TV station, recording studio	C	A	A	A	C	C	C	C	C		90-147(g)(4)e.
Trade, vocational, business school	C	A	A	A	C	C	A	A	C		90-147(g)(4)f.
All outdoor recreation, except as listed below:		A	A	A			C	C	C		90-147(g)(5)
Camp or campground									C		90-147(g)(5)
Commercial marina									C		90-147(g)(5)b.
Firearm training and sports facility									C		90-147(g)(5)c.
Riding stable									C		90-147(g)(5)d.
All overnight lodging, as listed below:											90-147(g)(6)
Bed and breakfast (up to 6 rooms)	C								C		90-147(g)(6)b.
Boutique hotel (7 to 30 rooms)	C	A	A						C		90-147(g)(6)c.
Hotel/motel (more than 30 rooms)		A	A						C		90-147(g)(6)d.
All parking, as listed below:											90-147(g)(7)
Commercial parking	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	C		90-147(g)(7)b.
All personal service, except as listed below:	A	A	A	A	A	A	C	C	C		90-147(g)(8)
Animal care (indoor)	A	A	A	A	A	A	C	C	C		90-147(g)(8)b.
Animal care (outdoor)	C	L	L		C	C			C		90-147(g)(8)c.
Beauty, hair, or nail salon	A	A	A	A	A	A			C		90-147(g)(8)
Tattoo parlor	C	C	C		C	C			C		90-147(g)(8)e.
Therapeutic massage	C	C	C		C	C			C		90-147(g)(8)d.
All restaurants	L	A	A						C		90-147(g)(9)
All retail sales, except as listed below:	A	A	A	A					C		90-147(g)(10)
Convenience store with gas pumps	C	L	L	L			C	C	C		90-147(g)(10)b.
Convenience store without gas pumps	L	A	A	A					C		90-147(g)(10)c.
Manufactured building, mobile home, or tiny house sales				L			L	L	C		90-147(g)(10)d.
Mobile vending	L	L	L	L			L	L	C		90-147(g)(10)e.
Pawnshop			L	L			L	L			90-147(g)(10)f.
Retail package sales of distilled spirits for off-premise consumption			C	C							90-147(g)(10)g.
Title loans, check cashing			L	L	L	L					90-147(g)(10)h.
All vehicle sales / rental, as listed below:											90-147(g)(11)

Recreational vehicle sales, leasing, or rental				L			L	L	C		90-147(g)(11)b.
Vehicle rental		L	L	L			L	L	C		90-147(g)(11)c.
Vehicle sales and leasing, new			L	L			L	L	C		90-147(g)(11)d.
Vehicle sales and leasing, used			L	L			L	L	C		90-147(g)(11)e.
Industrial Uses											
All light industrial, except as listed below:				C			A	A	C		90-147(h)(1)
Automobile or truck storage lot				C			A	A			90-147(h)(1)a.
Contractors office with storage				L			L	L			90-147(h)(1)c.
Detention center, jail, prison									C		90-147(h)(1)d.
Microbrewery			C	C			A	A	C		90-147(h)(1)f.
Sale or rental of machinery, etc.			C	C			A	A			90-147(h)(1)g.
All heavy industrial, except as listed below:								A	C		90-147(h)(2)
Concrete or masonry plant							L	A	C		90-147(h)(2)b.
Manufacturing or assembly plant							L	A	C		90-147(h)(2)c.
Tree service, etc.								L	C		90-147(h)(2)d.
All self-service storage				L			L	L	C		90-147(h)(3)
All vehicle service and repair, as listed below:											90-147(h)(4)
Car wash			L	L			C	C	C		90-147(h)(4)b.
Vehicle repair, minor			L	L			C	C	C		90-147(h)(4)c.
Vehicle repair, major			L	L			L	L	C		90-147(h)(4)d.
Vehicle repair, commercial vehicle				L			L	L	C		90-147(h)(4)e.
All warehouse and distribution							L	L	C		90-147(h)(5)
Data centers										L	90-147 (h)(6)
Research & development facilities										L	90-147 (h)(6)
Accessory Uses											
Accessory uses not otherwise listed below, as determined by the Planning Services Director:	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A		90-147(i)
Ancillary dwelling									C		90-147(i)(1)
Car wash		L	L	L			L	L			90-147(i)(2)
Drive-thru facility		L	L								90-147(i)(3)
Helicopter landing area			A	A			A	A	C		90-147(i)(4)
Home occupation									L		90-147(i)(5)
Ice vending machine		A	A	A			A	A	C		90-147(i)(6)

Mobile vending	L	L	L	L			L	L	L		90-147(i)(7)
Outdoor dining	L	L	L						C		90-147(i)(8)
Outdoor display	L	L	L	L					C		90-147(i)(9)
Outdoor storage, limited		L	L	L			L	L	C		90-147(i)(10)
Outdoor storage, general				L			L	L	C		90-147(i)(11)
Parking, on-site	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A		90-147(i)(12)

Sec. 90-98. List of lot and structure requirements.

The following table sets forth requirements for lot size, lot design and certain building requirements for the various zoning district as indicated:

			C-1	C-C	C-2	C-3	M-1	M-2	P-1	PUD*	PDD*	D-C****
(a)	Minimum lot area (sq. ft. or acre)		15,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	2 ac.	7,500	5 ac.	30,000	2 ac.
(b)	Maximum lot coverage by principal building and accessory structure (percentage)		50	50	50	50	50	50	50	—	50	50
(c)	Minimum lot frontage (ft.)		100	100	100	100	100	150	75	—	150	150
(d)	Minimum lot width at front building setback (ft.)		100	100	100	100	100	150	75	—	150	150
(e)	Minimum front building setback from street centerline (ft.):											
	(1)	Arterial street	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	—	125	125
	(2)	Collector street	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	—	90	90
	(3)	Service drive(from property line)	20	20	20	30	30	40	20	—	40	20
	(4)	All other streets	55	55	55	55	55	55	55	—	55	55
(f)	ETCOD/EL/FF NPOD maximum front building setback from street centerline (ft.):											
	(1)	Arterial street	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	—	125	125
	(2)	Collector street	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	—	90	90
	(3)	Service drive	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	—	20	20

	(4)	All other streets	55	55	55	55	55	55	55	—	55	55
(g)	ETCOD/EL/FF NPOD minimum front building setback from street right-of-way (ft.):											
	(1)	Arterial street	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	—	5	5
	(2)	Collector street (from right-of-way)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	—	5	5
	(3)	Service drive (from property line)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	—	5	5
	(4)	All other streets	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	—	5	5
(h)	See note below for parts of Washington Road and Columbia Road***											
	(1)	Arterial street	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	—	100	100
	(2)	Collector street	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	—	70	70
	(3)	Service drive	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	—	20	20
	(4)	All other street	55	55	55	55	55	55	55	—	55	55
(i)	Minimum rear building setback (ft.)**		20	20	20	30	30	40	10	10	40	40
(j)	Minimum side building setback (ft.)**		20	20	20	30	30	40	10	5	20	40
(k)	Maximum building height (ft.)		55	55	55	55	55	55	55	—	55	75

* All lot and structure requirements in the PUD and PDD districts, unless otherwise noted, shall be subject to the board of commissioners' approval. For information concerning additional restrictions, see section 90-182.

** In the C-1, C-C and C-2 zoning districts, the side and rear building setback lines from adjoining C-1, C-C or C-2 zoned land may be reduced to three feet from the common property line between the two such parcels of land. In the C-3, M-1 and M-2 zoning districts, the side and rear building setback lines from adjoining C-3, M-1 or M-2 zoned land may be reduced to three feet from the common property line between the two such parcels of land.

*** Minimum from building setback from street centerline (ft.) for that portion of South Washington Road CPOD beginning on its southeast end at the Columbia County/Richmond County boundary line and running and extending to the eastern right-of-way line of Kroger Road extended from the point it intersects with the southwestern right-of-way line of Washington Road straight

across Washington Road to the northeastern boundary line of the South Washington Road CPOD; and that portion of Columbia Road CPOD beginning on its eastern end at Washington Road and extending westward to the eastern right-of-way line of Dowling Drive where it intersects the northern right-of-way line of Columbia Road and the eastern right-of-way line of Reed Creek Road where it intersects the southern right-of-way line of Columbia Road.

**** Lots used for utility facility uses, such as substations, lift stations, and similar may reduce the size of the lot as approved by the Planning Services Division Director or their designee during the site plan review process. Where adjacent to other property zoned D-C the side and rear building setbacks may be reduced to three feet along those shared property lines. If a buffer is larger than a building setback, the buffer shall take precedence.

Sec. 90-139. Buffers and screening.

(a) *Purpose*. Buffer yards and screening are required in order to reduce the impact of a use of land on adjacent uses that are of a significantly different character, density, or intensity. Buffers shall be required to be located on any development project, as specified in this section.

(b) *Applicability*.

(1) *New construction*. Any new building or site improvement must comply with the buffering and screening requirements of this section.

(2) *Exceptions*. These regulations shall not apply to the construction or renovation of a single-family detached dwelling or two-family dwelling.

(3) *Maintenance and repair*. An existing building or site may be repaired, maintained or modernized without providing additional buffering or screening, provided there is no increase in gross floor area or improved site area.

(4) *Additions*.

a. When an existing building is increased in gross floor area or improved site area by up to 25 percent cumulatively, buffering and screening is required for the additional floor or site area only.

b. When an existing building is increased in gross floor area or improved site area by more than 25 percent cumulatively, both the existing building and site area and the additional floor or site area must conform to the buffering and screening requirements of this section.

(5) *Change in use*. A change in use only triggers the application of these requirements if a previously-developed site or building has been unused for one year or longer, or when there is a specific use standard requiring buffering or screening for the new use.

(c) *Design standards*.

(1) Buffer areas shall contain no structures, parking areas, patios, stormwater detention facilities or any other accessory uses, except for a fence, wall or earthen berm which is constructed to provide the visual screening required to meet the standards of this chapter. Underground utilities and driveways may be permitted to cross a buffer if the screening standards of this chapter will subsequently be achieved. Buffer widths are established to provide areas for landscaping throughout the entire width of the buffer and not to appear as a single planted row.

(2) Natural buffers may contain deciduous or perennial vegetation, but shall contain evergreen shrubs and trees suitable to local growing conditions that will provide visual screen during all seasons of the year. Natural buffers can be in the form of existing vegetation that is supplemented to provide the required separation from adjacent properties. Buffers should be designed to provide reasonable protection to adjacent neighbors from lights, sounds and other nuisance elements. The property owner shall be responsible for demonstrating the manner in which these criteria are met.

(3) Structural buffers shall meet the following requirements:

a. Structural barriers shall be vegetated throughout the minimum area required for the buffer around any fences or walls and upon any earthen berms, which may include grass, groundcovers, shrubs and trees.

b. Trees shall be located or planted within any structural buffer at a density of not less than one tree for each 20 feet of buffer length, or portion thereof. New trees shall have a caliper of not less than two inches upon planting, and may be clustered for decorative effect following professional landscaping standards for spacing, location and design.

c. Fences and walls shall present a finished and decorative appearance to the abutting property, and shall be located within two feet of the property line or on the highest elevation within the buffer area, provided that a variance in the location of such fences and walls may be granted in order to save and preserve existing vegetation where appropriate. The plan review staff will consult with the property owner to arrive at an agreement as to the optimum position for the location of the fence or wall consistent with the requirements set forth in the preceding sentence and depending on the need to address site specific conditions.

d. Buffers shall be designed to provide reasonable protection to adjacent residential uses from lights, sounds and other nuisance elements of nonresidential uses. The property owner shall be responsible for demonstrating the manner in which these criteria are met. The plan for the buffers submitted by the property owner must show the types and heights of exterior light fixtures proposed and the calculations for the foot candles originating from the property on and adjacent to the property before an electrical permit will be issued.

(d) *Residential zoning districts*. Required buffers in residential zoning districts shall meet the following requirements:

(1) Width of buffer. Buffer width shall be as indicated in section 90-139(h).

(2) Minimum required screening. Minimum required screening shall consist of a natural buffer, utilizing existing vegetation, or, upon written approval of the planning services director or his or her designee, a planted berm which provides a visual screen to a minimum height of six feet, or any combination of existing and replanted vegetation which can reasonably be expected to create a visual screen to a minimum height of six feet within two growing seasons.

(3) A minimum 25-foot natural buffer shall be maintained along the exterior boundary of a common development adjacent to a public or private road or right-of-way. Said buffer shall be fully contained in the development's common area. Such buffer shall remain undisturbed, except for areas improved as part of an attractive entrance feature. The planning services director shall approve alternate entrance buffer treatments.

(e) *High density residential zoning districts*. Required buffers in high density residential zoning districts shall meet the following requirements:

(1) *Width of buffer*. Buffer width shall be as indicated in section 90-139(h).

(2) *Minimum required screening*. Minimum required screening shall consist of a natural buffer, utilizing existing vegetation, which provides visual screen to a height of six feet, or any combination of existing and replanted vegetation which can reasonably be expected to create visual screen to a height of six feet within two growing seasons.

(3) *Modifications*. In lieu of a natural buffer, if a structural buffer is provided that creates a visual screen to a height of no less than six feet, the buffer may be reduced to a width of no less than ten feet.

(f) *Planned zoning districts*. Required buffers in planned zoning districts shall meet the following requirements:

(1) *Width of buffer*. Buffer width shall be as indicated in section 90-139(h).

(2) *Minimum required screening*.

a. Minimum required screening of multifamily projects as a part of a planned development shall consist of a natural buffer, utilizing exiting vegetation which provides visual screen to a height of six feet, or any combination of existing and replanted vegetation which can reasonably be expected to create visual screen to a height of six feet within two growing seasons.

b. Minimum required screening of non-residential projects as a part of a planned development shall consist of a structural buffer which creates a visual screen to a height of no less than six feet upon construction.

(3) *Modifications*.

a. Buffers may be established, increased or decreased by the board of commissioners as part of the zoning approval of the PUD, PRD, S-1, or PDD district.

b. In lieu of a natural buffer, if a structural buffer is provided for a multifamily project that creates a visual screen to a height of no less than six feet, the buffer area may be reduced to a width of no less than ten feet.

(g) *Nonresidential zoning districts*. Required buffers in nonresidential zoning districts shall meet the following requirements:

(1) *Width of buffer*. Buffer width shall be as indicated in section 90-139(h).

(2) *Minimum required screening*. Minimum required screening shall consist of a structural buffer which creates a visual screen to a height of no less than six feet, upon construction of such screen.

(3) *Modifications*.

a. Structural buffers in nonresidential zoning districts may be increased to a maximum height of ten feet where necessary or relocated on the site due to site-specific conditions by the planning services director or their designee during site plan review to achieve the optimum screening required.

b. A natural buffer may be provided in lieu of a structural buffer if the existing and planted vegetation in the buffer area creates a visual screen to a height of six feet.

c. On properties that abut property owned by the county, the board of commissioners, the county school district, the county board of education, or any other entity that is not subject to the provisions of chapter 90 of this Code, buffers may be waived or reduced during site plan review by the planning services director or their designee.

d. Buffers may be reduced or waived on properties that contain or abut areas on adjacent property where floodplain and/or wetlands are present, which will provide the intended buffering protection for adjacent property. Any such request shall be made during site plan review to the planning services director or their designee and shall be reviewed in conjunction with the county stormwater compliance department.

(h) *Summary tables of requirements*. The following tables present a summary of where buffers are required, the minimum width of such buffers, in feet, and the type of buffer.

Table 1. STRUCTURAL BUFFER (width in feet)	**Neighboring Development**							
	Low—Moderate Density Residential District	High Density Residential District	Planned Zoning District				Non-Residential Zoning District	
Proposed Development	R-A, R-1, R-1A, R-2,	T-R, A-R10, A-R	Single-family Residential	Multi-family Residential	Office or Commercial	Industrial	P-1, C-1, C-C,	C-3, M-1,

		R-3, R-3A, R-4						C-2, S-1	M-2, D-C
High Density Residential	T-R	20	None	20	None	None	None	None	None
	A-R10	20	None	20	None	None	None	None	None
	A-R	20	None	20	None	None	None	None	None
	PUD	20	None	20	None	None	None	None	None
Non-Residential	P-1	20	20	20	20	None	None	None	None
	C-1	20	20	20	20	None	None	None	None
	C-C	30	30	30	30	None	None	None	None
	C-2	30	30	30	30	None	None	None	None
	S-1	30	30	30	30	None	None	None	None
	PUD	30	30	30	30	None	None	None	None
	PDD	20	20	20	20	None	None	None	None
	C-3	40	40	40	40	10	None	10	None
	M-1	40	40	40	40	10	None	10	None
	M-2	40	40	40	40	10	None	10	None

Table 2. NATURAL BUFFER (width in feet)		**Neighboring Development**							
		Low—Moderate Density Residential District	High Density Residential District	Planned Zoning District				Non-Residential Zoning District	
Proposed Development		R-A, R-1, R-1A, R-2, R-3, R-3A, R-4	T-R, A-R10, A-R	Single-family Residential	Multi-family Residential	Office or Commercial	Industrial	P-1, C-1, C-C, C-2, S-1	C-3, M-1, M-2 , D-C
Low—Moderate Density Residential	R-A	See Table 3	None	**	None	None	None	None	None
	R-1		None	**	None	None	None	None	None
	R-1A		None	**	None	None	None	None	None
	R-2		None	**	None	None	None	None	None
	R-3		None	**	None	None	None	None	None
	R-3A		None	**	None	None	None	None	None
	R-4		None	**	None	None	None	None	None
High Density Residential	T-R	30	None	30	None	None	None	None	None
	A-R10	30	None	30	None	None	None	None	None
	A-R	30	None	30	None	None	None	None	None
	PUD	30	None	30	None	30	40	30	40
Non-Residenti	P-1	30	30	30	30	None	None	None	None
	C-1	30	30	30	30	None	None	None	None

*C-C zoning districts and above MUST install a structural buffer.

**Buffer shall follow comparable lot sizes for neighboring development from Table 3.

Table 3. NATURAL BUFFER FOR LOW—MODERATE DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (width in feet)		**Neighboring Development** Low—Moderate Density Residential District						
Proposed Development		R-A	R-1	R-1A	R-2	R-3	R-3A	R-4
Low—Moderate Density Residential	R-A							
	R-1	25						
	R-1A	25	25					
	R-2	25	25	25				
	R-3	25	25	25	25			
	R-3A	25	25	25	25	25		
	R-4	25	25					

(i) *Additional screening requirements*. In addition to the buffering and screening required in this section, evergreen screening shall be required to conceal specific areas of high visual impact or hazardous areas. Plants and a solid fence or wall, at least the height of the item being screened, but not more than eight feet tall, shall be installed around all sides, excluding access gates, of the following areas:

(1) Loading and service areas.

(2) Refuse collection points/recycling drop-off centers.

(3) Ground level mechanical, heating and air-conditioning equipment (except for single-family detached dwellings).

(4) Outdoor electrical or other above-ground utility equipment.

(5) Outdoor storage lots.

(6) Storage tanks.

(7) Communication towers and associated equipment structures.

Access gates to these areas shall be solid and, to the extent practical, not oriented to a public street.

Sec. 90-147. *Use provisions*

(h) *Industrial uses*

(6) Data centers & research and development facilities

a. *Defined.*

a. *Data center*. A facility that houses computing and networking equipment, along with storage and management systems, to support the storage, processing, and distribution of digital data and applications. A data center typically features high-performance servers, storage arrays, networking equipment, cooling systems, and power backup solutions to ensure uninterrupted operation. Server rooms or similar IT operations that are subordinate to a primary use are not included in this definition.

b. *Research and development facilities*. Facilities that investigate, design, test, and refine new or improved technologies. They involve systematic study and experimentation to create innovative products, enhance existing solutions, or discover new methods and materials. Engineering, healthcare, information technology, and manufacturing users use these facilities.

c. *Substation*. An electric facility system facility that converts higher voltages within or separate from a data center to generate sufficient power at maximum efficiency. Can operate independently for a dedicated site once directly connected to a transmission line.

b. *Accessory uses*. The following are allowed as accessory uses only.
   a. Office, storage, power supply and other such uses including utilities and battery energy storage systems normally auxiliary to the permitted principal use.
   b. Off-street parking and parking garages
   c. Security facilities and structures
   d. Employee gym, health spa, yoga studio
   e. Daycare for employees only
   f. Medical office for employees only
   g. Cafeteria for employees only
   h. Solar energy systems. See requirements for this use in this section.
   i. Public or private transit facilities
   j. Temporary construction yards, temporary construction trailers, and/or temporary concrete batch production that is part of the construction of the site. These temporary uses shall be removed upon completion of construction.
   k. Minor utilities subject to the requirements of Section 90-147 (f)(4) of Columbia County Code.
   l. Substations. See requirements for this use in this section.

c. *Use standards*.
   a. *Sound.*
      i. Facilities may not emit noise that exceeds 70 decibels (db) measured at the exterior property line. With an application for rezoning, a sound study of the proposed property shall be submitted showing ambient noise levels at the exterior property line prepared to industry standards. If noise levels exceed the allowable threshold, the developer or property owner shall implement mitigation measures including, but not limited to, acoustically treated enclosures for generators, cooling systems, and other operations equipment. All mitigation measures shall be designed to attune sound impacts on adjacent property which can be achieved through directing sound upward or other methods.
      ii. All facilities will adhere to nuisance requirements related to noise as found in Section 34-32 of Columbia County Code.
      iii. Prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for each building and with all systems functioning, a sound study showing compliance with this section shall be provided to Columbia County Planning. Said sound study shall follow industry standards.
   b. *Generators*. All generators shall be located away from any adjacent property zoned for residential use, agricultural use, or containing ground floor residential use, located to the interior of a site or proposed building complex to the most practical extent possible, and shall not be placed within a buffer or building setback. Except for generator testing, maintenance, or commissioning activities, generator use is limited to backup /emergency use only. Testing shall be conducted in a manner that minimizes noise, vibration, is within allowable sound limits as noted by this section and minimizes any traffic impacts on adjacent property.
   c. *Wells*. The development shall not utilize wells to provide water for any purpose. Development of this use is limited to areas that are served by Columbia County Water Utility.
   d. *Lighting*. All exterior lighting shall comply with applicable County and State regulations

concerning illumination levels, shielding requirements, and fixture specifications. Such compliance shall include, but not limited to, the following standards:

i. All lighting shall be full cut off, which prohibits any light vertically projecting and shall be directed away from any adjacent residential or agricultural property.
ii. Any accent or architectural lighting shall be recessed and directed downward onto the illuminated object or area.
iii. Any safety or utility structure lighting is exempt from these regulations. However, any strobe lighting utilized at night is limited to red.
iv. Construction lighting is permitted on a temporary basis but shall be shielded to prevent glare and light spillover onto adjacent property. Lighting will be off during non-construction hours.
v. A photometric and lighting plan shall be required and reviewed during building plan review for compliance with this section.

e. *Fencing*. A fence or freestanding wall that is closer to a property line than the front, side, or rear principal building setback line may not exceed 12 feet in height and shall have no barbed or razor wire. All fencing shall be black coated or painted vinyl or metal. Slats shall be limited to vertical placement only.

f. *Buffers*.

i. A minimum 250-foot-wide natural buffer shall be required along all property lines making up the exterior boundaries of the development, including all road frontages. However, along the Interstate Highway frontage only, the buffer may be reduced to 50 feet but shall remain undisturbed along that frontage except that any required utility crossings may be permitted within that buffer if they cross in as horizontal a manner as possible.
ii. Where adjacent to property zoned D-C, M-1 (Light Industrial), M-2 (General Industrial), or a planned district that includes data centers as a use, no buffer shall be required along that shared property line.
iii. Where adjacent to a property zoned for residential use, agricultural use, or with ground level residential, a minimum 500-foot-wide natural buffer shall be required.
iv. If a planted berm that provides a minimum visual screen that blocks the line of sight measured at the highest point at adjacent property lines and roads to the highest point on proposed structures in the development is proposed within the buffer along adjacent property or road frontages, the buffer may be reduced to 250 feet where adjacent to a property zoned for residential use, agricultural use, or with ground level residential and 125 feet where adjacent to other property or road frontages. No reduction in the buffer by use of a berm is permitted along the Interstate Highway.
v. If a reduction is proposed, a visual survey showing line of sight to the highest point on proposed structures in the development and at adjacent property lines and roads shall be provided for review by Columbia County during the rezoning process. Also provided shall be a study showing visuals and sight lines utilizing natural buffers as noted in sections i and iii of this section. The Columbia County Planning Services Division Director or their designee shall determine if the provided information warrants a reduction in the buffer and provide their determination to the applicant prior to issuance of a land disturbance permit.
vi. All plantings on the berm shall be reviewed by the Columbia County Landscape Architect for compliance with this section prior to issuance of a land disturbance permit wherein the buffer is constructed. Any berm utilized shall not be constructed closer than 25 feet from any adjacent property line or road frontage and any stormwater runoff from said berm

shall be directed away from adjacent properties.

vii. All required buffers shall remain undisturbed to the maximum extent practicable, except for necessary access points and utility crossings which shall cross the buffer in as horizontal a manner as feasible. In the case of a reduction in the buffer due to the use of a planted berm, disturbance for construction of the berm is permitted as approved during the land disturbance permit process.

viii. Where existing vegetation is insufficient to provide effective screening or is disturbed, including installation of berms, it shall be planted to a condition that provides screening per Section 90-139 (c) of Columbia County Code.

g. *Parking*. There are no established minimum or maximum number of off-street parking spaces required. The number of spaces required shall be determined based upon the number of employees associated with the actual use of the property and determined in conjunction with site plan review.

h. *Mechanical equipment*. Property owners shall screen mechanical equipment, whether roof or ground mounted, visible to adjacent property or roads using opaque fences or walls. Mechanical equipment includes, but is not limited to, meter boxes, utility conduits, HVAC equipment, vent and exhaust pipes, and cooling towers. Where air flow is desired, perforated brick walls and other methods may be considered. Any dumpster or trash enclosure shall follow the requirements of Section 90-139 (i).

i. *Solar energy systems*. When ground mounted, solar energy systems shall be screened with a minimum structural buffer of 20 feet meeting the requirements of Section 90-139 (c)(3). If roof mounted, the solar energy system shall be screened to not be visible from any adjoining property or public street. The method of screening shall be determined at building plan review.

j. *Landscaping and tree protection*. When developed as a campus, alternative methods of meeting Section 90-140 and 90-141 of Columbia County Code, such as utilizing basal area per acre, may be utilized in collaboration with the Columbia County Planning Services Division. Said methods shall be determined during site plan review for the campus.

k. *Building design*. All buildings on the site shall be limited in their exterior color or finish to earth tones, such as beiges, tans, greens, browns, and similar on all exterior elevations. Columbia County Planning Services shall review these requirements during the building permit plan review process for compliance with this section.

l. *Substations*. For the purposes of this section, a substation shall be screened so as not to be visible at ground level from any adjoining property or public street. The method of screening shall be determined at site plan review but shall meet the requirements of Section 90-139 (c) of Columbia County Code dependent on which type of screening is determined. No storage of vehicles or materials shall be permitted within the substation area.

m. *Utilities*. Any upgrades required to Columbia County owned utilities shall be the sole responsibility of the applicant.

n. *Environmental regulations*. The development shall meet all local, state, and federal requirements in regard to applicable environmental regulations at the time of construction.

o. *Electrical utility provider*. Prior to issuance of a land disturbance permit or building permit, whichever occurs sooner, for the site, a letter from the utility provider shall be submitted to Columbia County Planning verifying that the owner, operator, or developer is in compliance with all policies, procedures, and guidelines established by the provider.

p. *Project access improvements*. All projects shall comply with the most recent edition of the Columbia County Project Access Improvements Manual at the time of construction.

q. *Cessation of operations*.

i. Upon permanent cessation of operation of the primary use on the site, which is defined as zero electrical load to the primary use only for 90 consecutive days or a total of 180 days over a 365-day period, whichever occurs first, the owner shall notify Columbia County within 30 days of such occurrence. If the cessation of operation is caused by an Act of God, then repair or removal shall commence within 180 days.
ii. Within 12 months of the date of the notification to Columbia County, all structures on the site shall be demolished or removed to grade and the site restored to agricultural viability. Soil tests on the site shall be performed and provided to Columbia County and native grasses or crops shall be replanted per USDA guidelines.
iii. The Board of Commissioners may, at its sole discretion, approve an agreement to extend the timeline for compliance with this section for no more than 90 days.

Sec. 90-101. D-C data center district

(a) *Established.* The D-C Data Center District is established to provide for the development of data centers, research and development facilities, and associated accessory uses only. This district shall provide areas specifically suited for data processing, storage, and technology infrastructure facilities of varying scales, from small, single building operations to large multi-building campus development. Such uses typically require access to electrical and communications utilities, enhanced cooling systems, and secure environments, and may generate visual, noise, or utility impacts that distinguish them from conventional industrial activity. The land uses shall be as set forth in Section 90-97 with additional accessory uses in Section 90-147(h)(6) and lot and structure requirements shall be as set forth in Section 90-98.

(b) *Special requirements.* Additional requirements specific to this District are found in Section 90-147 (h)(6).