

**From:** randy.thelen@rightplace.org  
**To:** Joe Hune, James Kolodziej, Katie Ferris, mdavenport, Nelson Sanchez, Josh Hulst, Tony Sarsam, Chris Hufnagel, Bill Pink, Bob Richard, Matt Biersack, Luke Cherveney, Rich Sorota, Thomas Welch, Tina Freese Decker, stacy.paul, Jonathon Husby, Lauren Davis, Sean Welsh, Andi Owen, Garrick Rochow, David Van Andel, Mike VanGessel, Mark Washington, Richard Pappas, Triona Schmeiter, Rick Keyes, Renee Tabben, Shane Napper, John Kennedy, Michael Nelson, Rick Baker, Steve Downing (steve.downing@██████████), Charles Lott, John Tuttle, Randy Thelen, Dan Watts, Nick Hrnyak, Brad Kessel, Philomena Mantella, Vanderberg, Alan, Mark Wassink, rgdewaard@██████████, Tom Stritzinger, Charles Lott-personal, Julie Rietberg, Michael Palizzi, John Shay  
**Subject:** Happy Thanksgiving and some updates  
**Date:** 26-Nov-2025 09:19  
**Attachments:** Happy Thanksgiving and some updates.html [Save] [Open]  
 LOCAL LEADERS\_2025-Aug\_CI\_EconDev\_CountOnUsForGrowth\_OnePager\_FINAL.pdf [Save] [Open]  
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TEXT.htm

ATTACHMENT

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Happy Thanksgiving everyone. I hope you are able to find quality time with friends and family. ██████████ and I have ██████████ this week, resulting in a much ██████████ than normal—we love it!

**Our work with the data center industry will transition to the formal public hearing process in the coming weeks, so I want to provide you with an update:**

- With the Lowell project, which will be the first one to go through this rezoning process, the business park project has been highly public and engaging for nearly two years. This includes significant media coverage, FAQ on the city of Lowell and Lowell Township websites, email updates to several hundred local residents that signed up, six formal public hearings and a number of town hall/community conversations.
- Media coverage about two weeks ago on the potential of a data center
- "Council Coffee" for citizens to voice their questions
- Two Town Hall meetings with city, township, Consumers Energy, Franklin Partners (developer) and Right Place are available to answer any questions. All questions will be captured and, if not already addressed in the FAQ, will be responded to within 48 hours
- Planning Commission has a formal public hearing and potential vote scheduled for 12/8, where an amendment to their zoning ordinance is proposed that will clarify that data centers are eligible within their industrial zoning classification
- If the Planning Commission votes to make that change, there will be another public hearing and potential vote on 12/15 by the Lowell Township Board
- Additional public input will occur if the project progresses, including site plan review, Development Agreement, utility agreements

We also have worked with the data center companies to adjust their plans to better match the desires of the community, including:

- **Dramatic water reductions.** Two of them are proposing closed loop water systems, that essentially act like a car radiator to cool the data centers. One is considering a new air-

PORTIONS REDACTED  
AS NON-RESPONSIVE  
TO YOUR FOIA REQUEST

Nothing is easy these days, but we have taken a new approach and are ready for next week. My Thanksgiving dinner conversation will likely include a data center discussion, so I thought I would equip all of you with some info in case it comes up at your table too!

Happy Thanksgiving,

Randy



**Randy Thelen**  
President & CEO

☎ 616.771.0324 📠 616.275.2123  
✉ randy.thelen@rightplace.org 🌐 rightplace.org  
📍 25 Ottawa Ave SW, Suite 400, Grand Rapids, MI 49503

f in @



WEST MICHIGAN'S  
BEST AND  
BRIGHTEST  
EMPLOYEE TO WORK FOR  
WINNER 2025

We have a new address: 25 Ottawa Ave SW, Suite 400, Grand Rapids, MI 49503.



TW



# Powering Michigan's Growth

Count on us to help

## **Growth is Good for Michigan**

- **More Jobs:** New projects create jobs –from construction to operations – and support local businesses that serve those workers and companies.
- **More Tax Revenue:** Economic growth expands the local tax base, giving the state, cities, municipalities, and schools more resources to fund roads, teachers, and public safety.
- **More Opportunities:** When businesses grow, families have more choices – better jobs, stronger schools, and thriving communities where people want to live and stay.

## **Data Centers Will Not Raise Your Rates**

- When data centers come online, they pay for the energy and infrastructure they use.
- Data centers will help spread fixed costs across a broader customer base. This helps reduce cost pressure on other customers.
- Michigan's regulatory safeguards ensure rates are just and reasonable for all customers.

## **We Have the Energy Supply**

- We have plenty of reliable energy supply to meet growth demands even on the hottest days.
- We are already on track to add more natural gas, solar and battery storage projects to support additional generation in the near term to meet growing demand and replace retiring resources.
- Our long term plans include building a diverse portfolio of energy supply to meet growing demand.

## **We are Committed to Reliability**

- Upgrades will not only serve the needs of the proposed project but may improve the reliability in the area by upgrading or installing new poles, lines, and equipment.
- Bottom line, this means improved reliability at a lower cost for all customers.

## **We are Committed to the Environment**

- We are committed to the environment – to clean air, water, and land and to protecting the planet which matters to all of us.
- Our Energy Supply Plan will not just comply with Michigan's 2023 energy law but also add cost-effective resources to ensure new growth is served with a diverse portfolio of reliable energy.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Will new Michigan data centers raise my rates?**

No. They will pay their share of the energy they use and the infrastructure they need. As new, large business customers come online, they share the benefits **and** the cost of the overall electric system. And when fixed costs are shared by more customers, the overall cost burden is lower for each customer.<sup>1</sup>

### **Where is the energy coming from to support these massive projects?**

Consumers Energy has plenty of energy supply to meet customer demands—even on the hottest and coldest days. With natural gas plants, dispatchable renewable resources and battery storage in our energy supply portfolio, we can supply reliable, on-demand electricity to meet Michigan's growing energy needs. Our experts use advanced modeling technology to forecast how much power we'll need today and in the future. We then build robust plans to meet that demand, which includes potential for large business load requests. We continue to grow our supply capacity each year to meet the needs of all customers, while encouraging responsible energy use through our industry-leading energy efficiency and demand response programs.

### **What about the environmental impacts of data centers?**

We are committed to the environment—to clean air, water, and land and to protecting the planet, which matters to all of us. Our Energy Supply Plan will not only comply with Michigan's 2023 energy law but also add cost-effective resources to ensure new growth is served with a diverse portfolio of reliable energy.

### **Does Consumers Energy have enough power to support these large projects, and should we expect brownouts?**

We have plenty of reliable energy supply to meet today's demands and support future expansion across our state, contrary to what third-party stakeholders may claim. Our long-term energy supply plan (Integrated Resource Plan) details the evolving energy landscape and increasing demand with cost-effective generation over the course of the next twenty years. As future large customers come online in the future, our blueprint will transparently demonstrate how we will reliably and affordably meet the demand of all customers including proposed economic development projects in Michigan's pipeline.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>MPSC approves terms of service between Consumers Energy and data centers, other very large customers; adds protections for existing customers. 2025, November 6. [michigan.gov/mpsc](https://michigan.gov/mpsc)

<sup>2</sup>MPSC Resource Planning. [michigan.gov/mpsc](https://michigan.gov/mpsc)

To learn more, visit:  
[ConsumersEnergy.com/reliable](https://ConsumersEnergy.com/reliable)

**Consumers Energy**  
Count on Us™

MAIL

**From:** [al.vanderberg@kentcountymi.gov](mailto:al.vanderberg@kentcountymi.gov)  
**To:** Randy Thelen  
**Subject:** Data Centers  
**Date:** 22-Dec-2025 12:26  
**Attachments:** Data Centers.html [Save] [Open]  
**Creation Date:** 22-Dec-2025 12:26  
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**Status:** read  
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TEXT.htm

ATTACHMENT

Randy,

I'm looking for information that I can provide my Board in my weekly update (that just goes to them) to start educating them on data center issues. Garrick has stated numerous times that individual power bills will not be impacted by addition of data centers due to the fact that the PSC rules don't allow that and we are producing and even exporting plenty of power. Also, much is being made of impacts to ground water and my understanding is that recirculating methodologies will be used. I think you said that an amount equal to 30 residential swimming pools is required to operate the facility which uses recirculating technology. The total water need is about 2-4 times the 30 swimming pools per year.

I would like to include more documentation on these items and any others you think important in one of my Board weekly updates.

Thanks,

Al

**From:** randy.thelen@rightplace.org  
**To:** Vanderberg, Alan  
**Subject:** Re: Data Centers  
**Date:** 05-Jan-2026 12:04  
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C4DD6C575C

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Al,

I am sorry for the delay. I was traveling overseas, and our new cybersecurity protocols had blocked my ability to get emails in a timely fashion. That has since been corrected...

A few thoughts to share:

- **Current data centers:** Kent County has been home to Michigan's largest data center, Switch, for roughly 10 years. Kent County is also home to the HQ of US Signal, which has several data centers throughout Kent County and now across the country. Finally, Kent County has several enterprise data centers throughout the area owned and operated by our largest employers.
- **Michigan Tax Changes:** Some Commissioners may recall that when Switch first proposed their large-scale, co-location data center project, Michigan's tax laws did not fully contemplate data centers. Specifically, Michigan applied Sales & Use Tax on the acquisition of the server equipment whereas most other states do not. A data center refreshes their servers about every 3-6 years to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars. Michigan's Sales Tax treatment of data centers proved to be a barrier to investment. At the time of Switch, rather than address the core tax issue, a tax-free Renaissance Zone tool was applied. Fast forward to December 2024 when Michigan passed new legislation that allows data centers to apply to the state for Sales tax exemptions, which has resulted in Michigan being competitive for data center investments.
- **Electricity:** Both Michigan Public Service Commission regulations and the Sales Tax Exemption regulations require each data center to 'pay its own way' for electricity. This has long been true for all sectors—one sector cannot subsidize the other and vice versa. Consumers Energy would be the electric provider of any data center project in Kent County and they openly express their ability to serve the demand without impacting other rate payers. See more here.
- **Water:** Data centers generate a fair amount of waste heat, necessitating cooling systems. The choice essentially comes down to using water or electricity (air conditioning-type systems) to cool the facilities. Earlier data centers used water circulation systems that were relatively heavy water users. Today, data centers most often use a closed-loop water cooling system, which results in dramatically lower water usage. Water is pumped into the closed-loop system resulting in the use of about 25 residential swimming pools of water to

... systems, to cool the equipment. Older data centers used water treatment systems that were relatively heavy water users. Today, data centers most often use a closed-loop water cooling system, which results in dramatically lower water usage. Water is pumped into the closed-loop system, resulting in the use of about 25 residential swimming pools of water, to charge the system. Other than periodic recharging of the system (3-4 times/year), the only water demand would be for employee uses (restrooms, kitchen, etc).

- **Tax Base:** There are three data center projects seriously considering Kent County. If they were to occur and fully build out their long-term plans, Kent County could realize a 10% increase in its tax base (more than \$10B investment) from the use of 0.3% of the County land mass.

The Right Place has developed a landing page for data center 101 info which can be found here . This includes an FAQ section along with links to industry websites for additional information. With each of the three projects that are considering Kent County, we have worked with the company and community to find ways for the project to address long-standing community needs, including sizable infrastructure investments to resolve persistent water/wastewater issues that would support all residents. While there is serious pushback nationwide, and in our community, the 'data center dividend' must be weighed against any real or perceived costs /concerns.

If you have any further questions or would like me or someone on my team to come talk with the Commissioners about data centers, I am happy to do so.

Randy



**Randy Thelen**  
President & CEO  
☎ 616.771.0325 ✉ randy.thelen@rightplace.org  
🌐 rightplace.org  
📍 25 Ottawa Ave SW, Suite 400, Grand Rapids, MI 49503

f in @



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We have a new address: 25 Ottawa Ave SW, Suite 400, Grand Rapids, MI 49503.

**From:** Vanderberg, Alan <a.vanderberg@kentcountymi.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, December 22, 2025 12:26 PM  
**To:** Randy Thelen <randy.thelen@rightplace.org>  
**Subject:** Data Centers

Randy,

I'm looking for information that I can provide my Board in my weekly update (that just goes to them) to start educating them on data center issues. Garrick has stated numerous times that individual power bills will not be impacted by addition of data centers due to the fact that the PSC rules don't allow that and we are producing and even exporting plenty of power. Also, much is being made of impacts to ground water and my understanding is that recirculating methodologies will be used. I think you said that an amount equal to

MAIL

**From:** randy.thelen@rightplace.org  
**To:** Joe Hune, James Kolodziej, Katie Ferris, mdavenport, Nelson Sanchez, Josh Hulst, Tony Sarsam, Chris Hufnagel, Bill Pink, Bob Richard, Matt Biersack, Luke Cherveny, Rich Sorota, Thomas Welch, Tina Freese Decker, stacy.paul, Jonathon Husby, Lauren Davis, Sean Welsh, Andi Owen, Garrick Rochow, David Van Andel, Mike VanGessel, Mark Washington, Richard Pappas, Triona Schmeiter, Rick Keyes, Renee Tabben, Shane Napper, John Kennedy, Michael Nelson, Rick Baker, Steve Downing (steve.downing@██████████), Charles Lott, John Tuttle, Randy Thelen, Dan Watts, Nick Hrnyak, Brad Kessel, Philomena Mantella, Vanderberg, Alan, Mark Wassink, rgdewaard@██████████, Tom Stritzinger, Charles Lott-personal, Julie Rietberg, Michael Palizzi, John Shay  
**Subject:** GRR airport action item, data center update, strategic plan launch  
**Date:** 16-Jan-2026 16:03  
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Happy New Year everyone!

I hope your year is getting off to a fast, fun start. Here are a few quick updates and a specific ask

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TO YOUR FOIA REQUEST

**address letters of support to the address below, but send them to Brad Comment**

(commentb@rightplace.org) on my team, who will collect them in a batch and send them along.

The Honorable Sean Duffy  
Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington, DC 20590

2. **Data Centers:** In recent Board meetings, we have spent time discussing the pro's and con's of data center development. For Kent County, the two projects we are working on could deliver combined investment north of \$10B, which would be a 10% increase in the Kent County tax base. That is \$250M/year in new property taxes (if/when they build all phases), which could fund new roads, firetrucks, schools, and, importantly, sustained property tax cuts. I spoke with the Mayor of Pappillion, Nebraska this morning (suburb of Omaha, where I worked 10 years ago). When I was there, we recruited a Facebook data center and the Mayor and I talked about how that has worked out for them:

- Lowered their property tax millage on all residents and businesses each year for 10 years
- School system went from near bankruptcy to now the wealthiest in the state and has a new high school, new elementary school, and new STEM program.
- Infrastructure investments made by Facebook (and later Google) have opened up development opportunities in that area. "We have over 5M sq ft of industrial and commercial developments that have been sparked by the infrastructure that was delivered by the data centers"
- Electric rates dropped in the early years of data center deployment. They have climbed of late, but he did not attach that to the data centers.
- "I have not had a single citizen call complaining about data centers"

It was the call I needed after a week of difficult public meetings. I am planning to take a coalition of local officials from the Townships involved to Omaha in the weeks ahead. They need to see, hear, feel the positive impacts that can accrue. Further, you may have seen Microsoft announced a 5-point plan for "community-first" infrastructure that commits them to pay electric rates that protect all other rate payers, dramatically reduce their water usage, pass on local property tax incentives, and train/hire local residents for the jobs. You will be hearing more of this locally next week as they step forward at a series of public meetings. While the road ahead for these companies to receive their rezoning approvals will be bumpy, I remain impressed by our local elected officials who have had to endure some challenging public meetings. As they say, we must deal in facts. If any of you ever have any questions, feel free to call me any time: 616.275.2123.

~~3) Strategic Plan - We are~~

**From:** randy.thelen@rightplace.org  
**To:** Vanderberg,Alan  
**Subject:** Data Center meeting on Friday - invitation  
**Date:** 26-Jan-2026 19:57  
**Attachments:** Data Center meeting on Friday - invitation.html [Save] [Open]  
headers.822 [Save] [Open]  
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Al,

Per our prior conversation, I would like to invite you and the Kent County Board of Commissioners to a lunch at The Right Place this Friday at noon. We will be joined by a number of state elected officials, as well as officials from Gaines Township, Lowell Township, and Solon Township. We will have lunch available and will do our best to keep the meeting to one hour—noon to 1p. The agenda is as follows:

- **Welcome**
- **Data Center Industry Overview** - Dan Watts, CEO of US Signal, a data center company HQ'd in Grand Rapids. He will explain the industry, it's history, and this moment of rapid expansion.
- **Data Center Projects** - Randy Thelen, CEO of Right Place, regional economic development organization. He will walk through the projects before the communities, what concerns are being raised, how those concerns may be addressed, and what benefits should be considered.

Please let me and Donna know of anyone who wishes to attend.

Randy



**Randy Thelen**  
President & CEO

616.771.0325 randy.thelen@rightplace.org  
 rightplace.org  
 25 Ottawa Ave SW, Suite 400, Grand Rapids, MI 49503



WEST MICHIGAN'S  
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BEST PLACES  
COMPANIES TO WORK FOR**  
WINNER 2025



Randy >



*Portion redacted  
as non-responsive  
to the request*

Thu, Dec 4 at 7:31 AM



Tue, Jan 27 at 1:46 PM

Sent u an email last night re data center luncheon this Friday. Would love to see a few people there from Commission if possible. Target Lowell, Gaines, Solon Twp representatives.

**ITEM 6**

Wed, Jan 28 at 12:37 PM



We're on it. I'll be there and I trying to get 3-4 Commish to attend as well.

Delivered



Messages





**From:** Faber, Stephen <stephen.faber@kentcountymi.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 2, 2026 11:18 AM  
**To:** Randy Thelen <randy.thelen@rightplace.org>  
**Subject:** Thank you and follow up

You don't often get email from stephen.faber@kentcountymi.gov. Learn why this is important  
Randy,

Thanks for hosting folks for the data center discussion on Friday. It was really informative and helpful as we navigate this new territory.

As you develop the website and FAQ, I'd encourage the team to explicitly share how local projects will be similar or different from the project moving forward in Washtenaw. I lived this when I worked on comms for our Waste to Energy facility. People would google, find articles about the incinerator in Detroit, assume we were the same, and launch attacks that took a lot of time to unwind and defend.

<https://www.craingsgrandrapids.com/news/real-estate/west-michigan-communities-scramble-to-prepare-data-center-zoning-rules/>

Oracle's 1.4-gigawatt OpenAI project, which is planned to begin construction in Washtenaw County in the first quarter of this year, would be the largest energy user in the state. The facility is expected to consume enough electricity for 1 million homes, which would lead to a 25% increase in DTE's regular load by the end of 2027. Data centers use water to cool down equipment, with large projects using up to 5 million gallons a day, equivalent to the water use of a town with a population of 10,000 to 50,000, the Environmental and Energy Study Institute reported in 2025. Data centers that have closed-loop systems, such as Oracle's project in Saline Township, require less water than projects that have evaporative systems. Still, a sister project to the Saline Township data center in Texas is projected to use 8 million gallons of water to fill its closed-loop system, and then about 10 million gallons annually in refills, Crain's Detroit Business reported.

Please keep the county in the loop as you move forward with the comms pieces,

Thanks,

Steve Faber  
Kent County Commissioner - District 18  
cell: 616-821-8006  
stephen.faber@kentcountymi.gov

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**From:** randy.thelen@rightplace.org  
**To:** Faber,Stephen  
**Subject:** Re: Thank you and follow up  
**Date:** 02-Feb-2026 11:30  
**Attachments:** Re: Thank you and follow up.html [Save] [Open]  
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Thanks, Steve. We will do our best to address the points you raise below. It is very difficult to play 'whack-a-mole' with the claims made by those opposed to data centers. Even the comments below regarding water usage—I am not aware of a single new data center that uses anywhere near that amount of water today. The designs have changed, the cooling systems have changed, and the choice has changed (10 years ago, communities, including Omaha where I was working, wanted to see more water use to help their local systems operate more efficiently). I don't know that we will ever be able to respond to each claim against the data center industry, but we will provide clear info on how modern data centers can function in a community like ours—address the concerns while reaping the benefits.

More to come. Soon.

Randy



**Randy Thelen**  
President & CEO

f in @

616.771.0325 | randy.thelen@rightplace.org

rightplace.org

25 Ottawa Ave SW, Suite 400, Grand Rapids, MI 49503



We have a new address: 25 Ottawa Ave SW, Suite 400, Grand Rapids, MI 49503.

**From:** Randy Thelen <randy.thelen@rightplace.org>

**Sent:** Tuesday, February 3, 2026 4:45 PM

**To:** Robert Ellick <supervisor@solontwp.org>; Rod Weersing <rod.weersing@gainestownship.org>; Jerry Hale <supervisor@lowelltpw.org>; Al Vanderberg <al.vanderberg@kentcountymi.gov>

**Cc:** Brent Case <CaseB@rightplace.org>; Donna Ford <DFord@rightplace.org>

**Subject:** Re: Data Center meeting--thank you, follow up, and next steps

Bob, thank you for catching that. I will make the change and resend to everyone tomorrow. Technically, the same is true in Lowell Township as the rezoning application was withdrawn in December.

As for "active project," my point was that companies are actively considering the three communities. To your point, while the companies are "active" with due diligence, they are not all "active" with the communities. Sometimes bullet points in a PowerPoint don't allow for enough words to make the complete point.

Randy

Get Outlook for iOS

**From:** Robert Ellick <supervisor@solontwp.org>

**Sent:** Tuesday, February 3, 2026 4:27 PM

**To:** Randy Thelen <randy.thelen@rightplace.org>; Rod Weersing <rod.weersing@gainestownship.org>; Jerry Hale <supervisor@lowelltpw.org>; Al Vanderberg <al.vanderberg@kentcountymi.gov>

**Cc:** Brent Case <CaseB@rightplace.org>; Donna Ford <DFord@rightplace.org>

**Subject:** RE: Data Center meeting--thank you, follow up, and next steps

Randy,

After a brief review of this information I found at least one incorrect statement, Solon Township does not have a formal request for rezoning or site plan review. In addition to that I did not realize without applying to our planning commission that Solon was an active project.

Thank You Bob Ellick

---

**From:** Randy Thelen <randy.thelen@rightplace.org>

**Sent:** Tuesday, February 3, 2026 1:47 PM

**To:** Rod Weersing <rod.weersing@gainestownship.org>; Jerry Hale <supervisor@lowelltpw.org>; Robert Ellick <supervisor@solontwp.org>; Al Vanderberg <al.vanderberg@kentcountymi.gov>

**Cc:** Brent Case <CaseB@rightplace.org>; Donna Ford <DFord@rightplace.org>

**Subject:** [External] Data Center meeting--thank you, follow up, and next steps

Please share with your colleagues as I do not have email addresses for everyone that attended last week. Please make special note of the invitation to a Zoom call with a data center community on 2/26.

Thank you for taking the time to attend our program last Friday to learn about the data center industry and the projects considering Kent County. As we discussed, there are legitimate concerns raised by the public that must be addressed while considering the benefits that can be realized if these projects come to fruition. While much of the country has experienced data center development of this scale, Michigan has not, so we are all learning in real time together. In that spirit, please note the following:

- Attached you will find my presentation from Friday
- We are able to get municipal leaders from Papillion, NE (home of two hyperscale data centers) to hold court with us on February 26<sup>th</sup> from 2:30-4p EST via Zoom. Please let

Attached you will find my presentation from Friday

- We are able to get municipal leaders from Papillion, NE (home of two hyperscale data centers) to hold court with us on February 26<sup>th</sup> from 2:30-4p EST via Zoom. Please let Donna know (ccd on this email) if you and others on your respective Boards and Planning Commissions would like to attend.
- We are planning a new standalone website focused on data centers and the three active project communities (Gaines, Lowell, Solon), but in the meantime [this page](#) will be of value to you and your community
- Here is [an article](#) I found that outlines one community's similar path and what they learned from a data site visit to Iowa. I have no idea who these people are, but it speaks to the sound/noise question many of you are getting.
- We are working to schedule a data center tour in Grand Rapids. More details to follow.

I look forward to working with all of you as we continue to learn more about the data center industry to determine if it is a fit for the region and your community.

Feel free to call me if you have any questions—mobile: 616.275.2123

Thanks,

Randy

**Randy Thelen**  
President & CEO

616.771.0325

[randy.thelen@rightplace.org](mailto:randy.thelen@rightplace.org)

[rightplace.org](http://rightplace.org)

25 Ottawa Ave SW, Suite 400, Grand Rapids, MI 49503

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We have a new address: 25 Ottawa Ave SW, Suite 400, Grand Rapids, MI 49503.

**From:** randy.thelen@rightplace.org  
**To:** Rod Weersing, Vanderberg, Alan, Robert Ellick, Jerry Hale  
**CC:** Donna Ford, Brent Case  
**Subject:** Re: Data Center meeting--thank you, follow up, and next steps  
**Date:** 05-Feb-2026 15:14  
**Attachments:** Re: Data Center meeting--thank you, follow up, and next steps.html [Save] [Open]  
 ~WRD0000.jpg [Save] [Open]  
 Data Center Luncheon Final.pdf [Save] [Open]  
 headers.822 [Save] [Open]

**Creation Date:** 05-Feb-2026 15:14  
**Store Date:** 05-Feb-2026 19:37  
**Status:** read  
**Box Type:** received  
**Folder:** Alan Vanderberg > Inbox  
**Message Id:** 7c0923aab963ed4d9f4b6068f813058f0000000010c#5F355BCA7A3B8333AFED15BA9882D0ABC46CDC2C0EE4D96C5FBB13FC0CDA8A14

TEXT.htm

ATTACHMENT

**CAUTION:** This email was sent from an external source. Please do not open suspicious links or attachments.

Sorry for the delay in getting back to everyone. Attached you will find a revised presentation that better captures the status of each project. Please forward as you see fit.

Randy



**Randy Thelen**  
President & CEO

f in @

☎ 616.771.0325 ✉ randy.thelen@rightplace.org

🌐 rightplace.org

📍 25 Ottawa Ave SW, Suite 400, Grand Rapids, MI 49503



WEST MICHIGAN'S  
BEST AND  
MOST DIVERSE  
COMPANIES TO WORK FOR  
WINNER 2025

We have a new address: 25 Ottawa Ave SW, Suite 400, Grand Rapids, MI 49503.

**Supply Chain  
Management  
Conference**  
March 3, 2026

Join 300+ manufacturing and supply  
chain professionals to learn about  
what's next in the industry

**SAVE YOUR SPOT >>>**

**From:** Randy Thelen <randy.thelen@rightplace.org>

**Sent:** Tuesday, February 3, 2026 4:45 PM

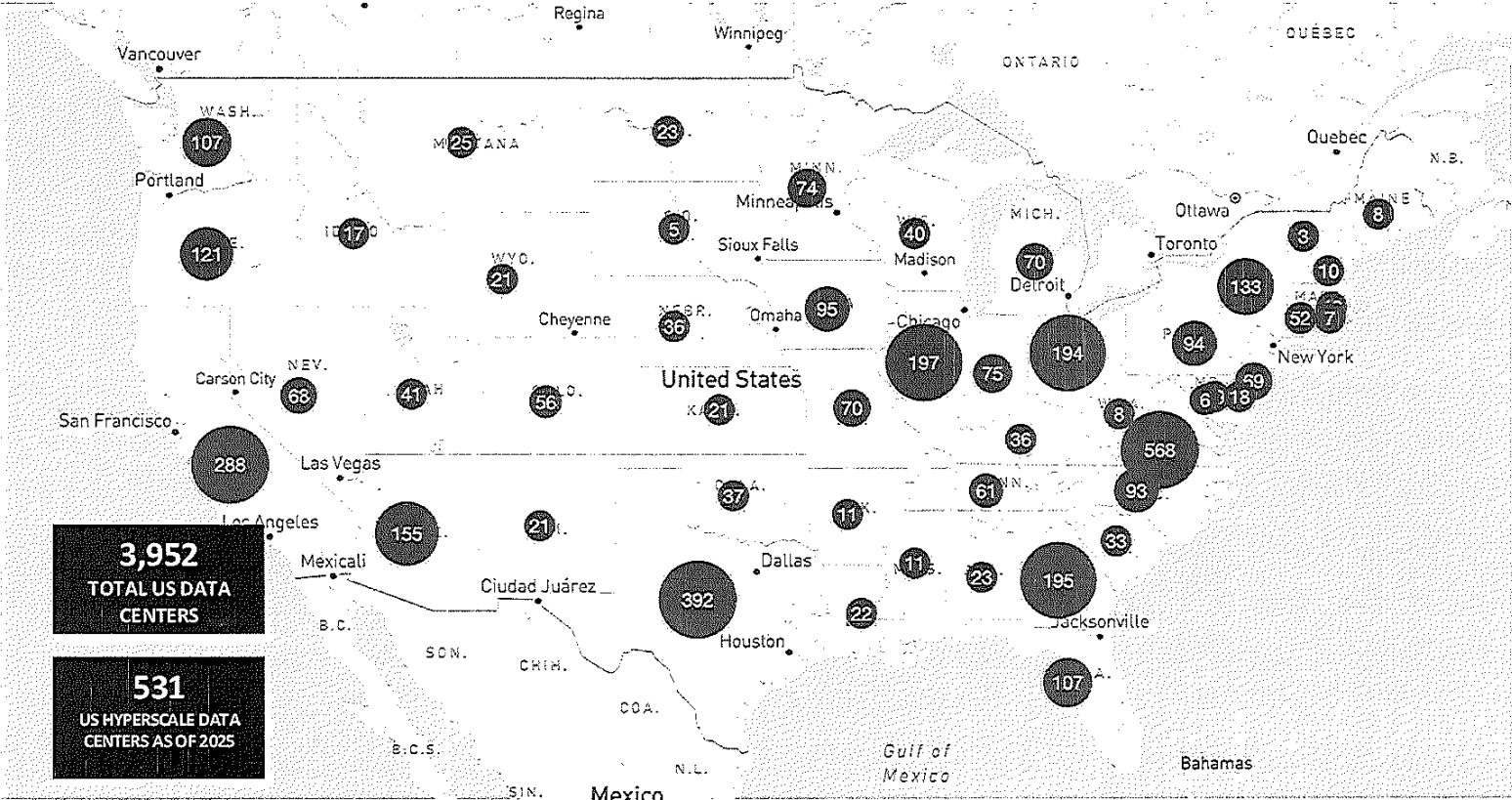
**To:** Robert Ellick <supervisor@solontwp.org>; Rod Weersing <rod.weersing@gainestownship.org>; Jerry Hale

# DEMYSTIFYING DATA CENTERS

RANDY THELEN  
THE RIGHT PLACE

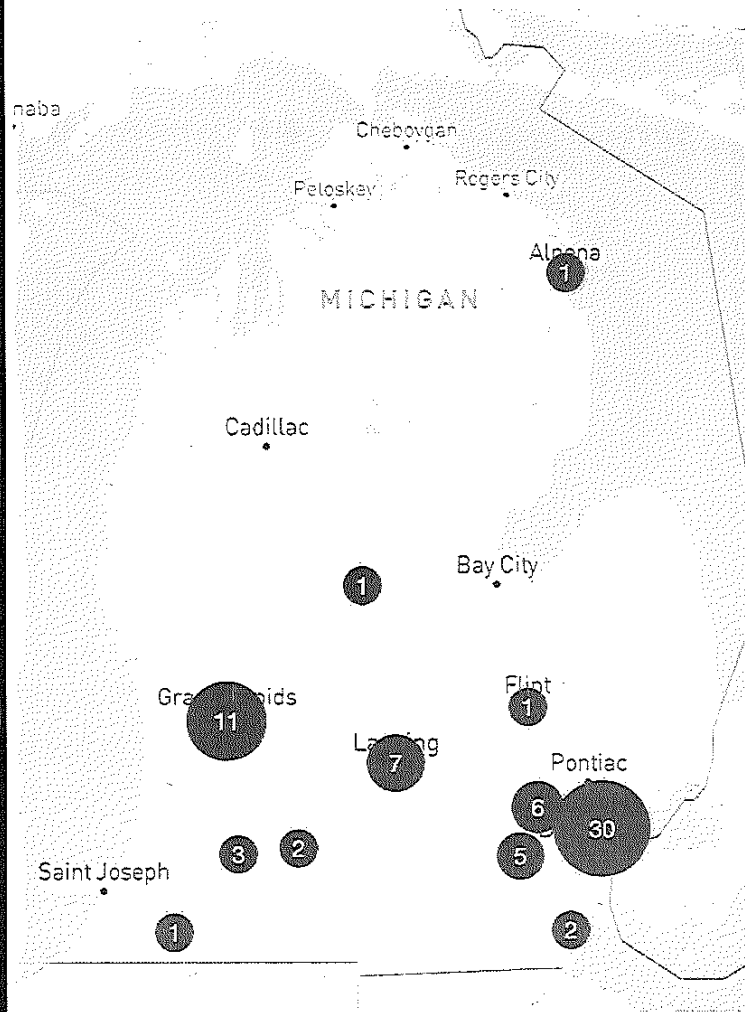


# US DATA CENTERS



SOURCES: DATA CENTER MAP, IBISWORLD

# MICHIGAN DATA CENTERS

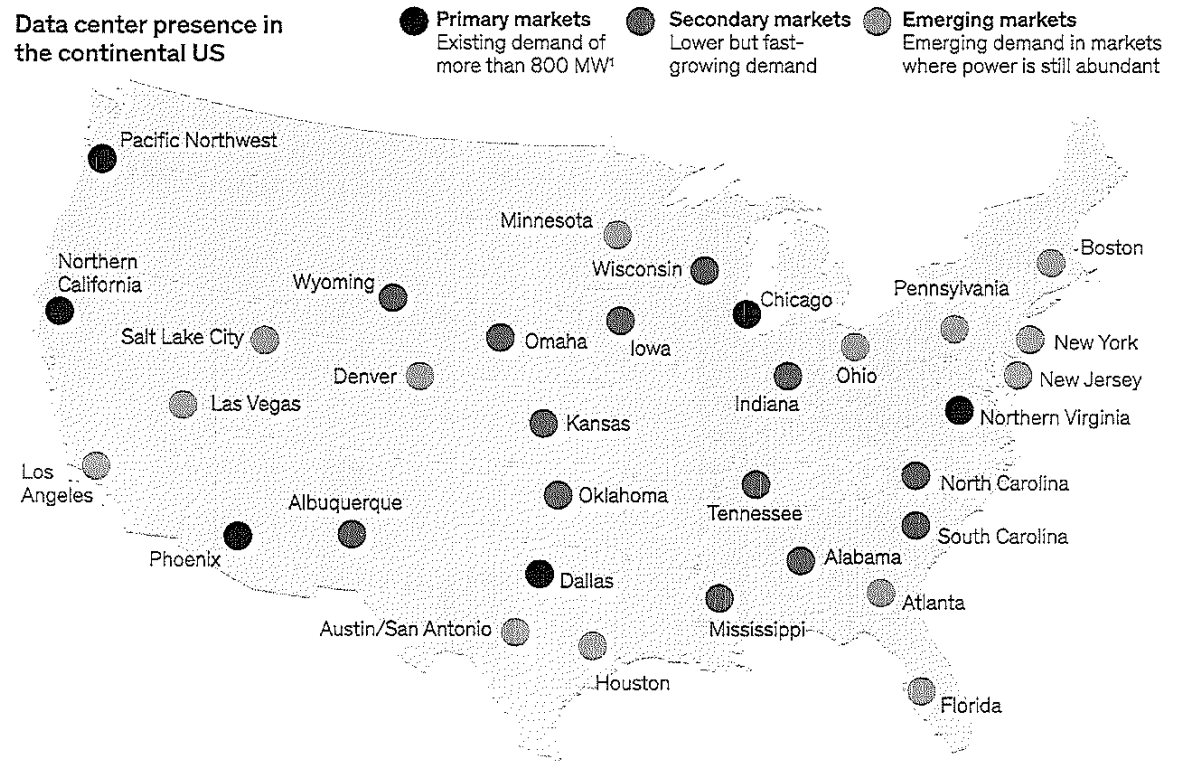


MARKET	# OF DATA CENTERS
KALAMAZOO	3
DETROIT	30
LANSING	7
GRAND RAPIDS	11
ANN ARBOR	5
MONROE MI	2
BATTLE CREEK	2
FLINT	1
NEW HUDSON	6
MOUNT PLEASANT	1
ALPENA	1
CASSAPOLIS	1
<b>Total Data Centers:</b>	<b>70</b>

SOURCE: DATA CENTER MAP

**Michigan was  
not even  
considered  
"on the map"  
for large  
data centers.**

**Data center presence in  
the continental US**



<sup>1</sup>Megawatt.  
Source: Datacenters.com; S&P Global Market Intelligence 451 Research; McKinsey Data Center Demand model

## **Bipartisan Michigan law grants exemptions on data center Sales and Use Taxes (December 2024)**

- Law treats data centers **similarly to manufacturing** for sales and use tax purposes
- Targets large-scale projects that drive **significant private investment and create high-skill, high-wage jobs**
- Among the nation's **strongest requirements for environmental, performance, and ratepayer protections**



# DATA CENTER SITES



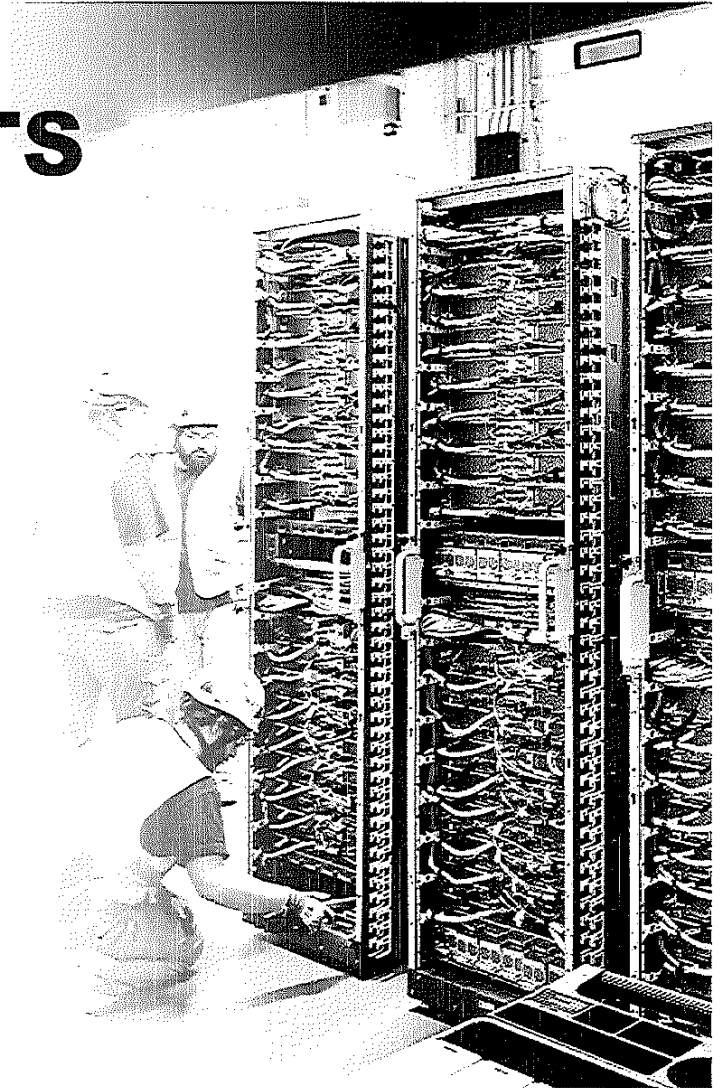
# DATA CENTER CONCERNS

- Energy usage, source and costs
- Environmental impacts
  - Water usage
  - Noise and light pollution
  - Stormwater management
- Traffic and infrastructure
- Site plan details/building design
- Jobs for local residents



# DATA CENTER BENEFITS

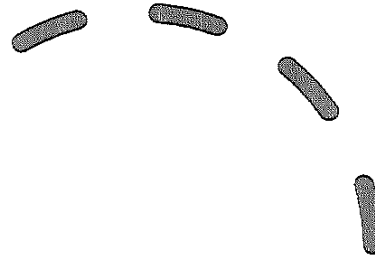
- Tech Jobs – 600 in first phase (200 each)
  - Could approach 1,500 jobs at full build out
- Average salary of \$125,000+
- Large scale construction project employing upwards of 3,000 workers
- Spur local supplier and contractor opportunities
- Extraordinary property tax benefits



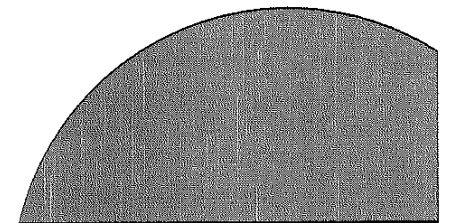
# PROPERTY TAX BENEFIT EXAMPLE

	\$1 BILLION INVESTMENT
K-12 SCHOOLS	\$15,851,650
GRAND RAPIDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE	\$839,650
KENT ISD	\$2,675,750
LOCAL MUNICIPALITY TOTAL	\$7,972,500
AUTHORITIES (Library, Senior Millage, etc)	\$541,600
KENT COUNTY	\$3,001,850
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$30,883,000</b>

# THE PATH FORWARD



- **Gaines, Lowell, and Solon Township currently in various stages of formal rezoning requests and site plan reviews**
- **Communities and companies are listening to community feedback**
- **Process is a bit unusual**
  - Usually done in steps—rezoning, site plan, building permit
  - Public wants all the answers upfront and at once
  - Can be done, but this approach will take longer
- **Community outreach efforts**
  - Companies preparing to deploy their community engagement efforts



# THE PATH FORWARD



- Communities and companies are listening to community feedback
- Current Status:
  - Gaines: Rezoning request is before the Planning Commission
  - Lowell: Rezoning request was withdrawn by developer
  - Solon: No formal request has come forward at this time
- Process is a bit unusual
  - Usually done in steps—rezoning, site plan, building permit
  - Public wants all the answers upfront and at once
  - Can be done, but this approach will take longer
- Community outreach efforts
  - Companies preparing to deploy their community engagement efforts



# DATA CENTERS IN PAPILLION, NE

*"Wildly exceeded expectations!"*

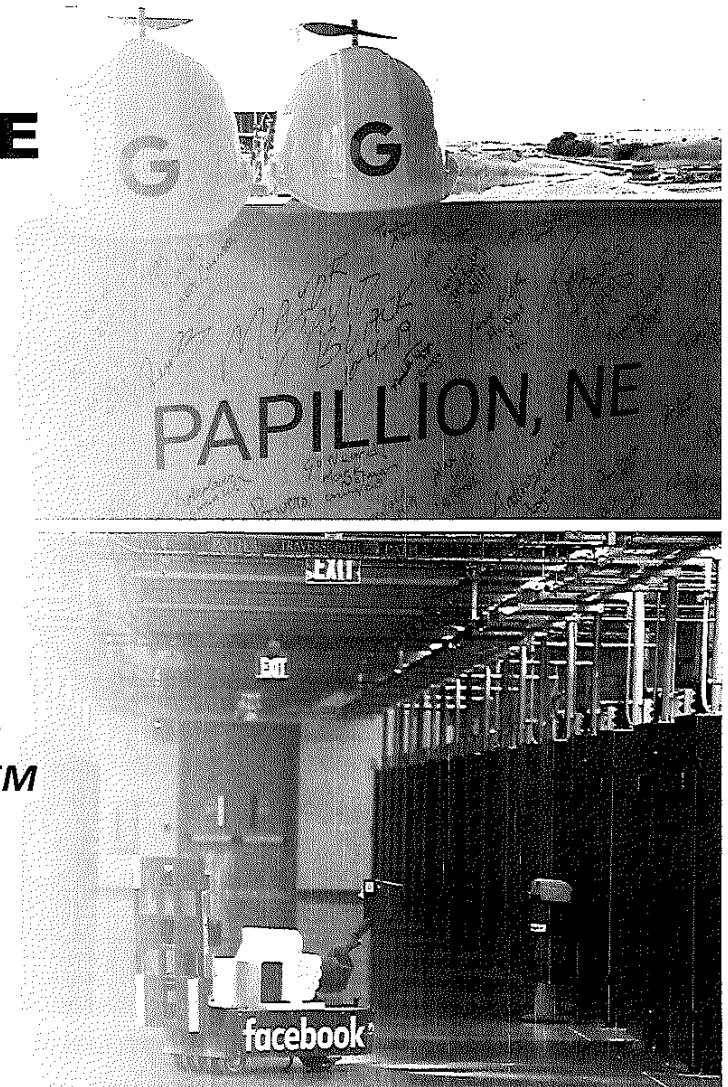
*"Allowed us to build new water and wastewater infrastructure."*

*"Electric reliability has improved dramatically due to their redundant systems."*

*"Area school district went from near bankruptcy to now one of the wealthiest in NE—new high school, new elementary school, new STEM program."*

*"We found a true win-win partnership."*

**"ZERO CITIZEN COMPLAINTS, NOT ONE"**



**THANK  
YOU**

