

Public Comment - 8/24/26 WS

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Thank you Commissioners for your efforts this last couple of years to move against corruption and inconsistency. Thank you to John, Katie, Vamsee and team for the work they are doing to give county citizens a voice and to make themselves available. I know I have a limited view of what you all do, and want to show respect for your leadership toward re-establishing trust in the wake of corruption. The initiatives to have public meetings on the UDC updates and the forming of Stakeholder Committee show true effort in the direction of transparency.

Mr. Poole, you communicated on Aug 13 more than once that you'd like citizens to "turn the temperature down" on their concerns about data centers. My question is...Where are the voices in support of data centers? Are you suggesting we assume that non-local corporations are "the other side" we need to be open to? I want to be open to hearing from all angles on this issue, but I'm not sure where to go to hear from supporters on this, as I have yet to encounter one. I have asked Vamsee my initial questions, and he has been professional in his replies.

Great leaders understand that perceptions lead to trust or mis-trust. We as a county are just getting back to square one in building trust.

At the UDC mtg., I asked the staff whether it was possible to separate the data center issues from the understandable pressure to release the moratorium. They said you as a Board could do that. I have had practical challenges with the inconsistencies in the UDC, and am encouraged that our staff is going through it with a fine-tooth comb, and fixing it. I think we need to free them up to move forward on that.

However, I would like to ask that you separate the updates on data centers from the vote on the UDC and release of the moratorium. I believe this would give us as citizens more time to hear from all angles and to understand the upsides (if they exist). I am not confident that any of us- including you all- have had a chance to be educated enough on the benefits that would outweigh the seeming risks.

Vamsee may be the only one who can speak to this from a deeply knowledgeable place, and we have not enough opportunity for him to educate and defend the need for regulations. This is driving a perception that the county is in a hurry with this, and is cracking the door open by even creating guidelines in the UDC. Though I don't think it actually is the intent, at least I hope not, it drives a perception that it is being imposed on citizens against their will. I think that is what is making this "hot", and my understanding is that you as a Board have the authority to cool it down by giving citizens more time and voting on the other updates so that the staff can move forward.

Are you all open to this approach? And if not, could you tell me why?