Hatboro Planning Commission

Tuesday, November 10, 2026

Austin Mosby, AICP

Meet the Planner: Austin Mosby, AICP!



- Hatboro resident from 2012-2021
- Former Member of Hatboro Residents Association and Hatboro Parking Commission
- Advocate for Train Station Renovation
- “The Pie Guy”

Meet the Planner: Austin Mosby, AICP



- Master of Science in Urban and Regional Planning
  - University of Central Florida (2025)
- 3 years of planning experience
- Certified Planner with American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP)

Agenda Items

- Heavy Industrial Mixed Use (HI-MU) Text Amendment
- Data Center Draft Ordinance

HI-MU Proposed Text Amendment

HI-MU Proposed Text Amendment

What is “HI-MU”?

HI-MU stands for Heavy Industrial Mixed Use District.

What’s a text amendment?

A text amendment means no changes are proposed to the zoning map, just changes to rules for what’s allowed in a certain district.

Where did it come from?

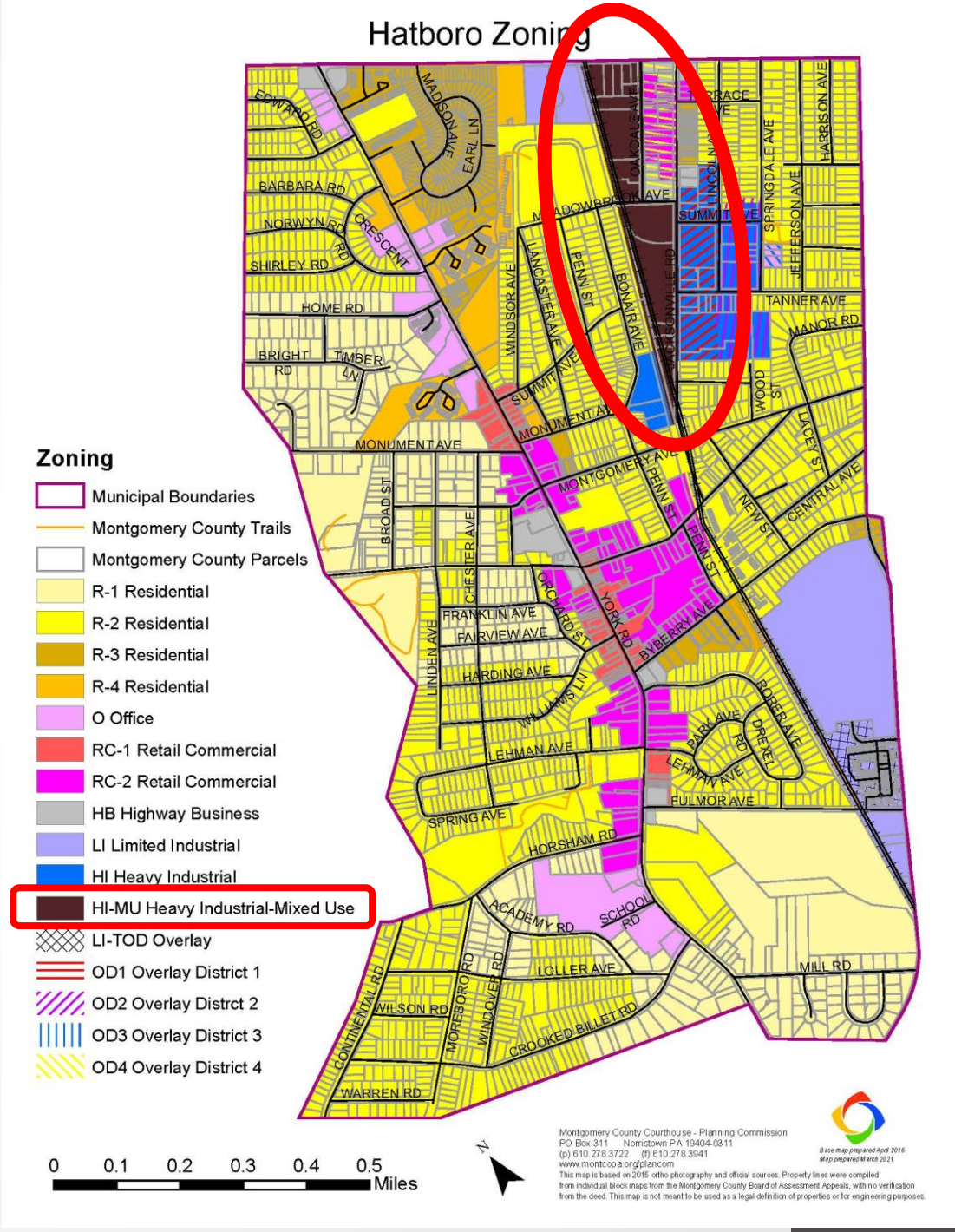
The amendment is being proposed by Plumridge, LP, owner of Hatboro Lofts.

How does it impact the zoning re-write?

The text amendment is based on the current (active) zoning in Hatboro and is separate from the zoning re-write.

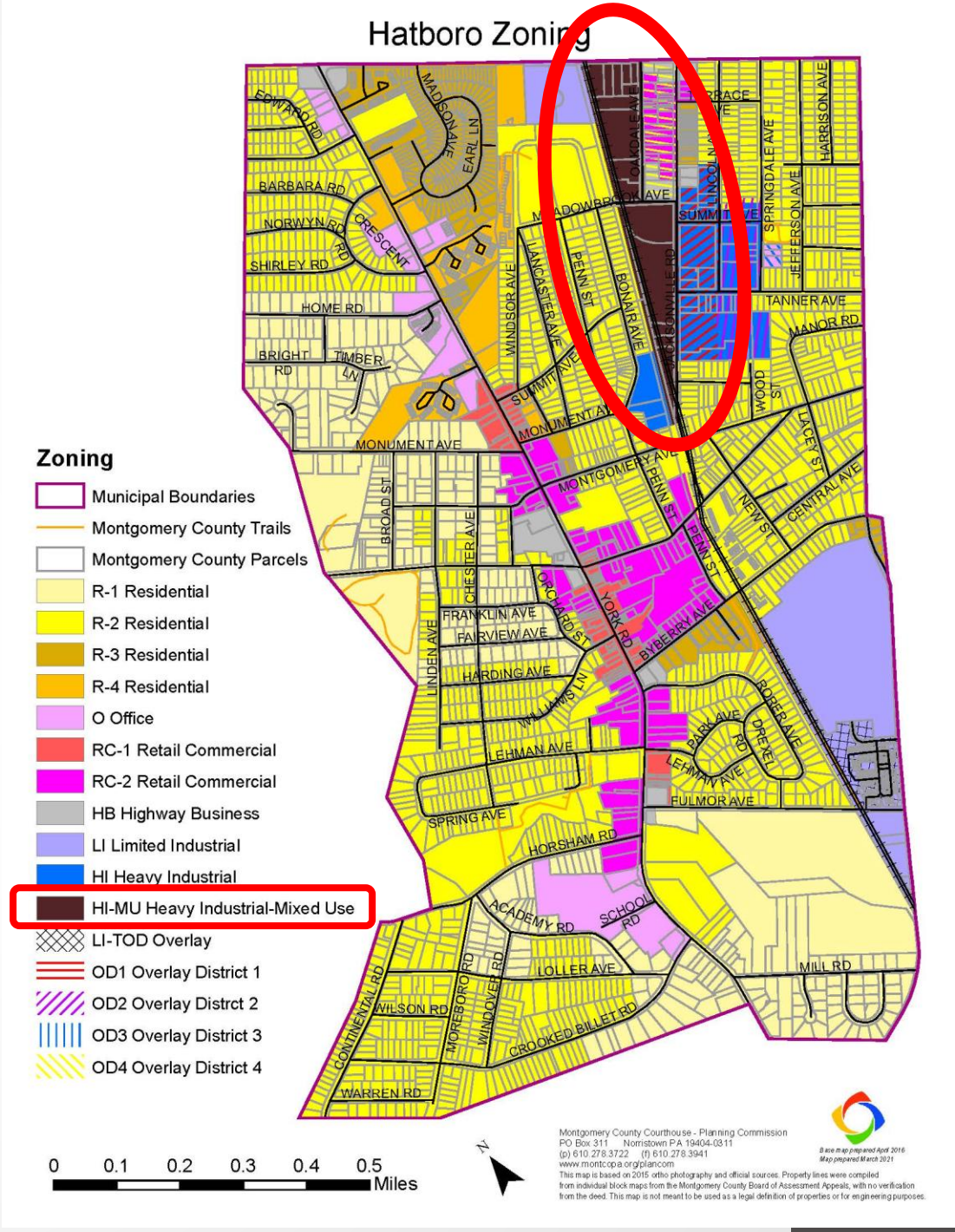
HI-MU Proposed Text Amendment

- HI-MU district allows multifamily (apartments) if **and only if** they include a “mixed use” component.
- “Mixed use” here is flexible and can include…
  - parks
  - a playground, tot lot, open space
  - indoor recreation facility for residents only
  - a child day care if authorized by special exception
- Another rule in the HI-MU: Residential use must comprise 85 to 95 percent of the building’s floor area.



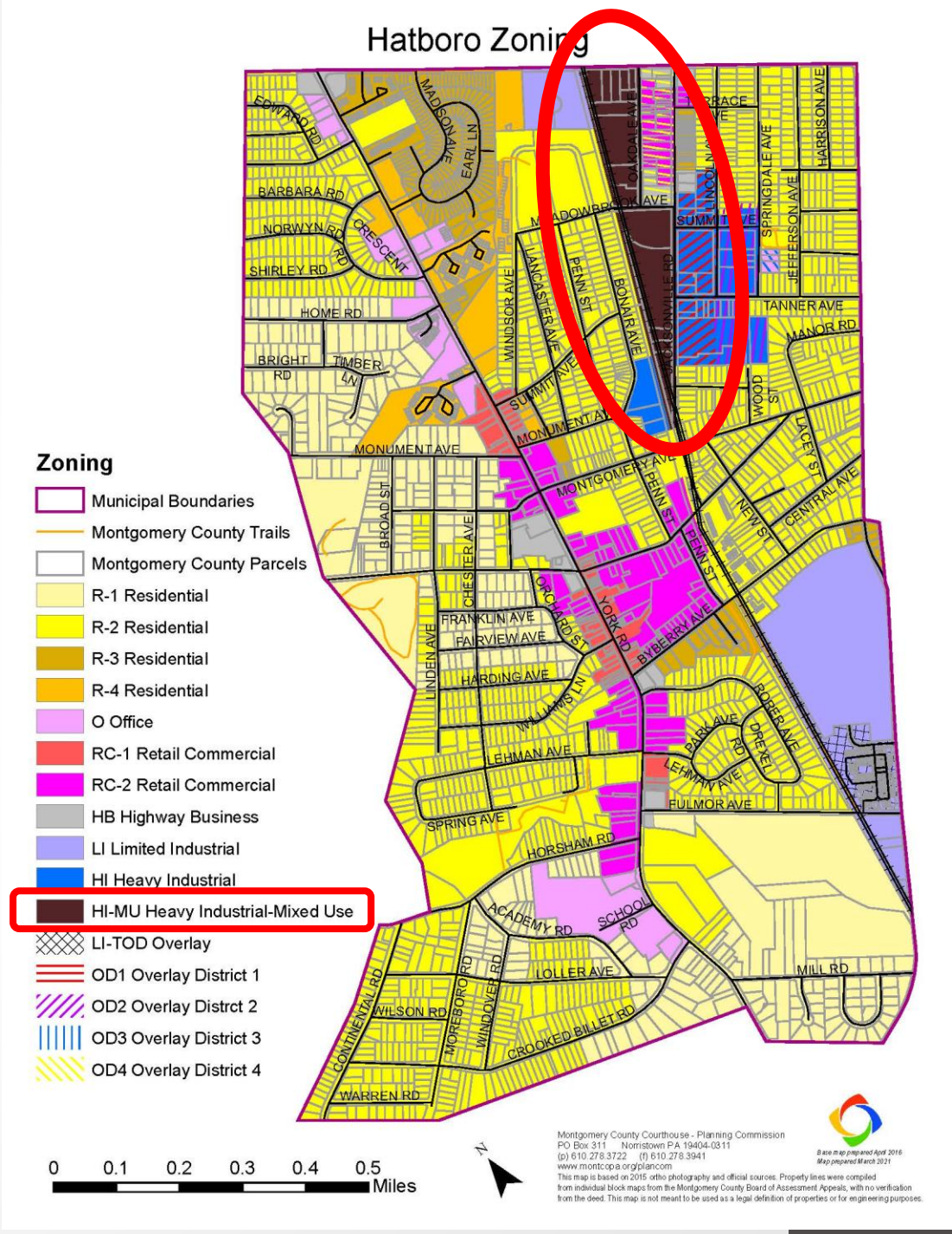
HI-MU Proposed Text Amendment

- Proposed text amendment would allow owners of mixed-use buildings to convert any vacant commercial space to residential by conditional use if it sits vacant for one year.
- Would require property owner to demonstrate to Borough Council at conditional use hearing that “reasonable efforts” were made to lease the commercial space.



Recommendation

- Consider that a text amendment may not be necessary at all.
  - Conversion looks allowed already, as long as 85 to 95 percent of the building is residential.
- Reevaluate if now is the time to pass any standalone zoning amendment.
  - Borough is rewriting the entire zoning code.



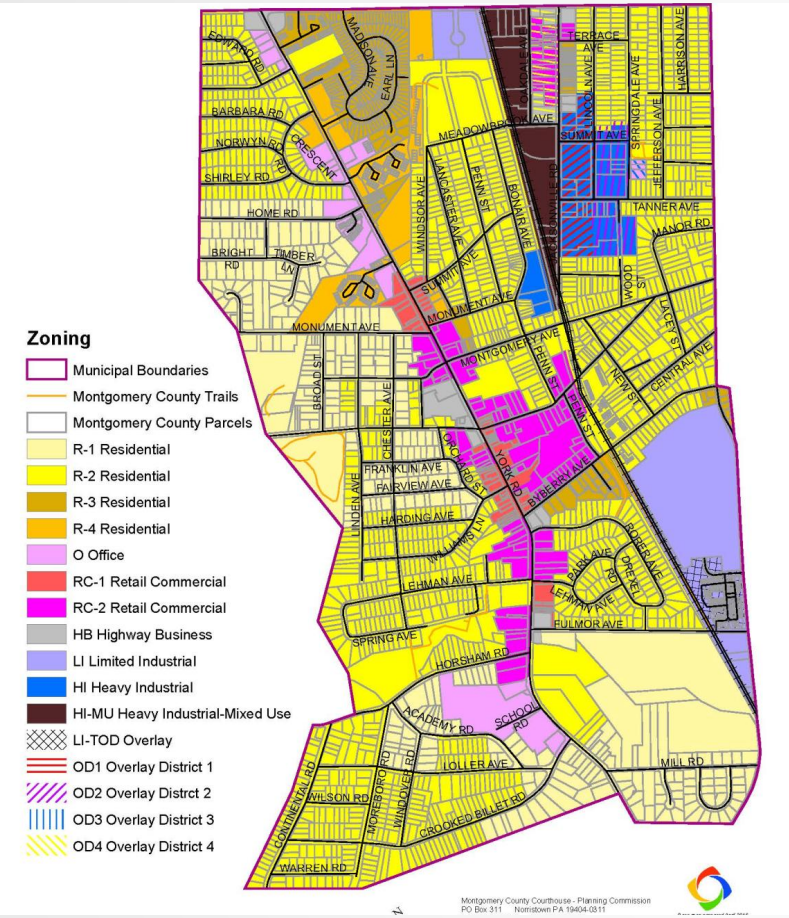
Regulating Data Centers

Recommendations for Hatboro's data center ordinance

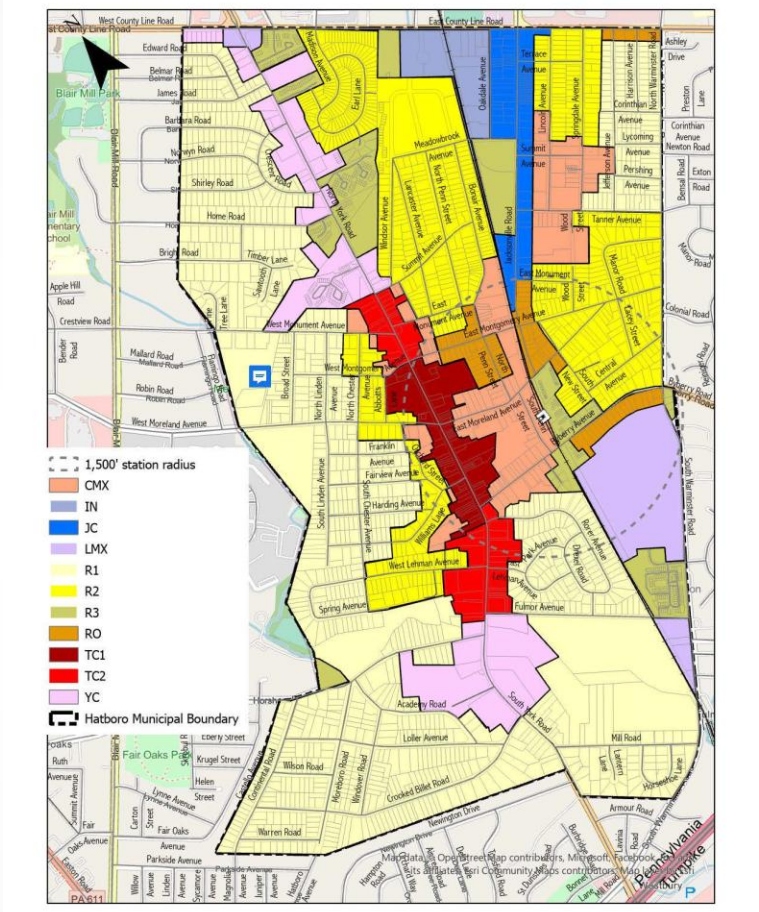
What Does a Data Center Ordinance Do?

Location & Siting	• Limits where data centers can locate. • Requires setbacks and buffers from homes and other sensitive places.
Design & Visual Impacts	• Controls building scale and height. • Requires landscaping, screening, and façade design to reduce visual impacts.
Noise & Vibration	• Regulates operational noise, including equipment and backup systems. • Requires studies and post-construction verification to ensure compliance.
Water Use & Environmental Protection	• Regulates large water withdrawals for cooling and operations. • Requires studies to demonstrate water availability and prevent impacts to wells and streams. • Establishes monitoring and remedies if water supplies are harmed.
Infrastructure & Public Safety	• Requires confirmation that electric and water systems can support the facility. • Mandates emergency response planning and coordination with first responders.
Accountability	• Requires financial security to address potential damage to water supplies. • Establishes enforcement tools and clear responsibility for remediation if impacts occur

Solicitor's Draft is based on zoning map in effect today:



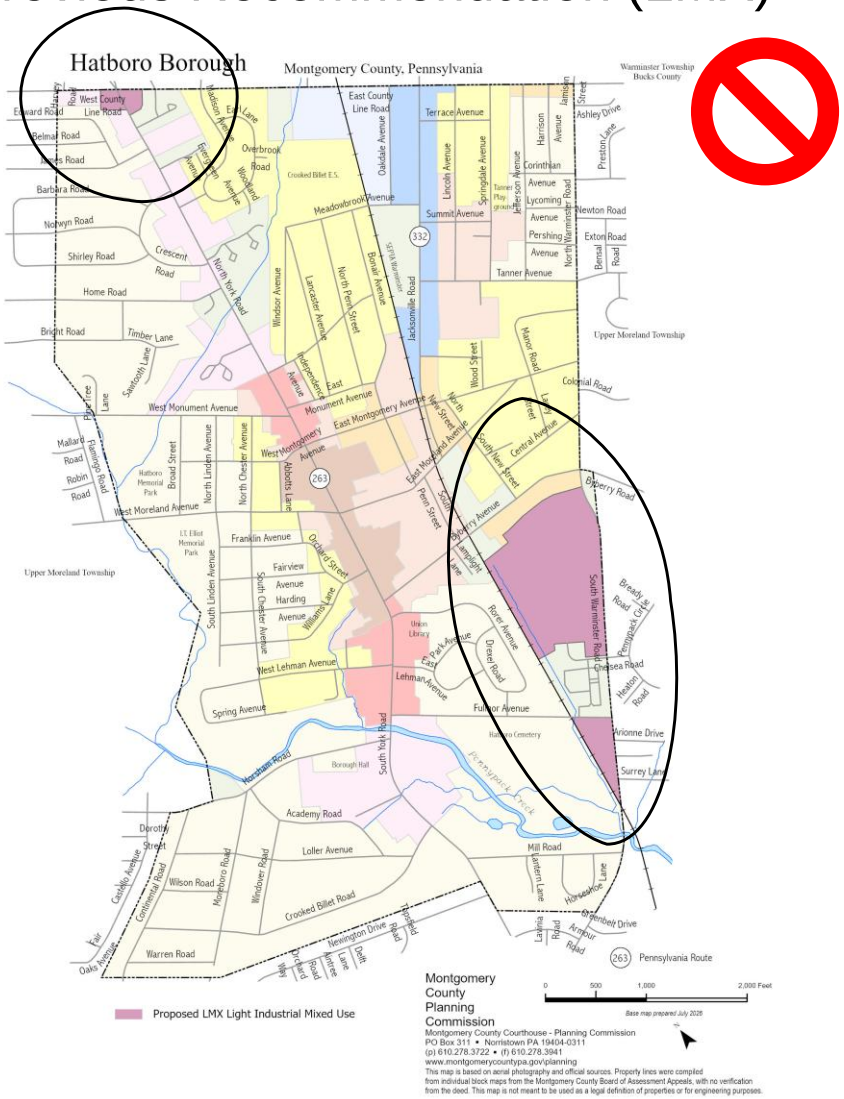
Planner's Recommendation: focus on data centers in context of zoning re-write.



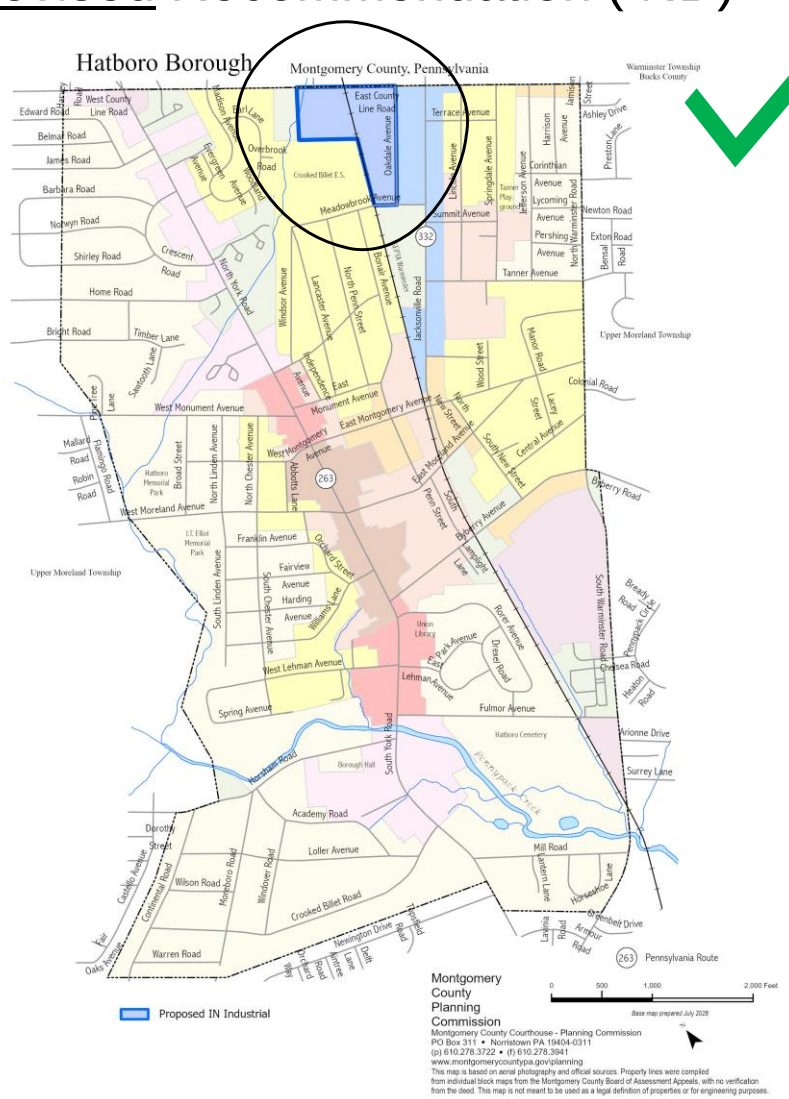
Zoning re-write creates an entire new zoning map and rules.

Choosing the Right District

Previous Recommendation (LMX)



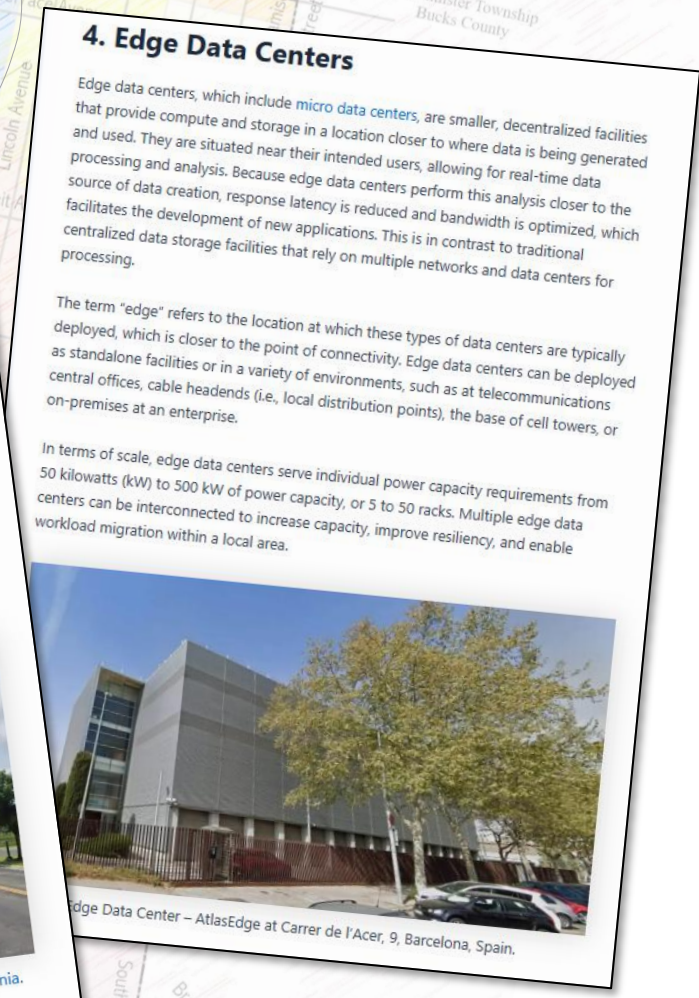
Revised Recommendation (IND)



Could a Data Center *Fit* Here?

Data Center Category	Square footage (sf)
Edge or Micro Facilities	**<5,000 sf**
Enterprise Data Centers	5,000 to 50,000 sf
Colocation Facilities	50,000 to 600,000 sf
Hyperscale/Cloud Data Center	600,000 to over one million sf





Source:
Zhang, M. (2023). Types of data centers: Enterprise, colocation, hyperscale. Dgtl Infra. https://dgtlinfra.com/types-of-data-centers/



BUILDING FOOTPRINT COMPARISON

25,000 SF FOOTPRINT

50,000 SF FOOTPRINT

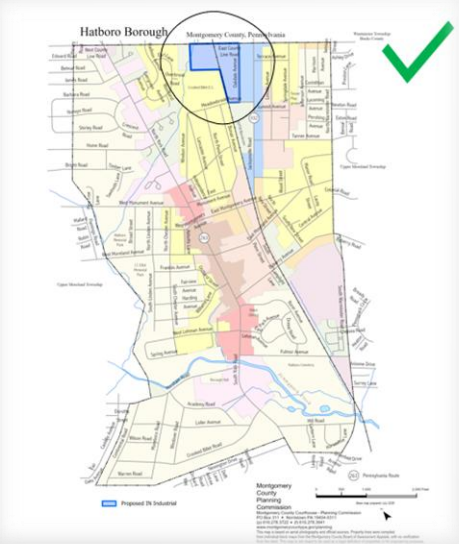
100,000 SF FOOTPRINT

Choosing the Right District



LMX (Limited Industrial Mixed-Use) District Intent

- to provide for a variety of nonpolluting and smaller-scale industrial, research & development, and office facilities
- to establish reasonable incentives to encourage the redevelopment of buildings into safe and adequate multi-family housing and limited commercial uses when applied for as a conditional use
- The development of a variety of residential, commercial, and recreational uses shall serve to replace economically and socially outmoded industrial land uses with mixed-uses that do not have adverse effects on surrounding neighborhoods . . . and are beneficial to the public health, safety, and welfare.



IND (Industrial) District Intent

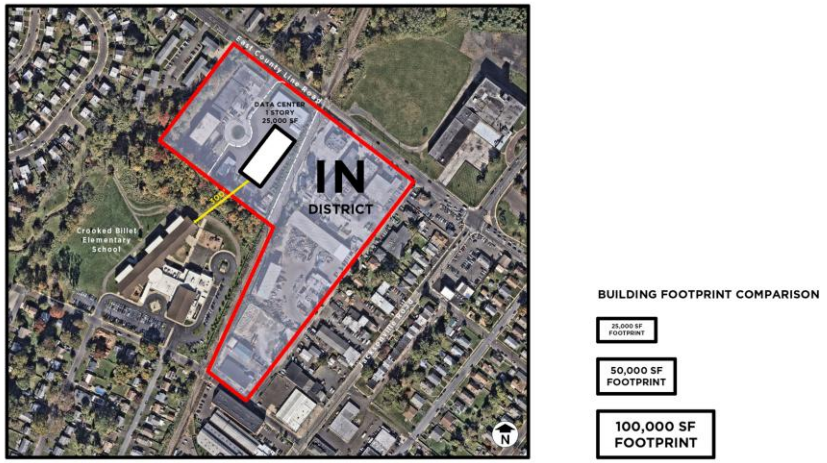
- to provide for a variety of manufacturing, fabricating, and processing plants with adjunctive office facilities.

“Just ban them!”

National Land and Investment Company v. Easttown Township Board of Adjustment (1965)	PA Supreme Court	four-acre zoning; cannot exclude population growth
Exton Quarries (1967)	PA Supreme Court	exclusion must have enhanced relationship to health safety and welfare
Concord Township Appeal (1970)	PA Supreme Court	a scheme of zoning that has an exclusionary purpose or result is unconstitutional



Scaling and Distancing Recommendations



	Current Draft	Recommendation
Size	No size limit	25,000 sf maximum
Distance from sensitive receptors	1,000 ft, can be reduced to 500 ft	300 ft, can be reduced to 150 ft
Lot setbacks	250 ft all sides	Underlying district

Data Center Zoning Ordinance Sections

a. Street access
b. Bulk standards
c. Design
d. Energy usage plan
e. Energy Generation Systems Usage
f. Backup Power Usage
g. Water Usage
h. Thermal Impact
i. Noise
j. Air Pollution
k. Emergency Response
l. Electronic Waste
m. Parking
n. Decommissioning
o. Public Engagement

Recommendations

1. Do not adopt the text HI-MU Text Amendment
   - It may not be necessary.
   - The zoning re-write completely revamps the zoning code and map.
2. **MOTION** to incorporate Data Center regulations with recommendations into Part 16 of the Zoning Re-write
   - District: IND Industrial District
   - Size: 25,000 sf maximum size
   - Distancing: 300 ft distancing from sensitive receptors with option to reduce to150 ft with commensurate mitigation.



Questions?

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