

Warrick County Provides Update on Preliminary Data Center Inquiry

WARRICK COUNTY, Ind. - On July 30, the Warrick County Commissioners, County legal counsel, and representatives of Warrick County Economic Development participated in an executive session with representatives of the development team evaluating a potential data center development in Warrick County known as “Project Zora.”

The executive session was held under Indiana’s Open Door Law, which permits interviews and negotiations with an industrial or commercial prospect. The discussion was preliminary and informational. As required by Indiana law, no vote or final action was taken. No nondisclosure or confidentiality agreement has been signed. The County made no commitment, entered into no agreement, and granted no approval concerning Project Zora. No outcome was promised or predetermined. Consistent with their prior public statements, the Commissioners informed the Project Zora development team that they would not sign a nondisclosure or confidentiality agreement concerning Project Zora, and no such agreement has been signed.

The meeting allowed County representatives to learn more about Project Zora, ask questions, communicate concerns raised by residents, and explain the County’s ongoing consideration of potential data center regulations.

Based solely on information provided by the Project Zora development team, the Commissioners currently understand Project Zora as follows:

- The Project Zora development team represented that it has approximately 1,200 acres in northern Warrick County under project control. The property reportedly consists primarily of reclaimed mine land.
- The preliminary concept anticipates developing approximately 300 acres, with much of the remaining property left undeveloped to provide separation from surrounding properties.
- The Project Zora development team stated that the undeveloped portions of the property would provide substantial separation from surrounding properties and that the proposed facilities would not be visible from major roads. The County has not independently verified the proposed building locations, buffer distances, visibility, or proximity to homes, farms, roads, and other nearby uses.
- The Project Zora development team stated that it has an agreement with a prospective end user and anticipates being able to publicly identify that end user by year end.
- The Project Zora development team stated that it will not submit a permit application to Warrick County for Project Zora before January 2027. This is a representation by the Project Zora development team and it does not predetermine any future governmental decision.
- The Project Zora development team stated that Project Zora remains in the due-diligence stage and that its evaluations will address environmental conditions; water supply, consumption, cooling, wastewater, and impacts on existing users; electrical demand, transmission, interconnection, and grid impacts; threatened and endangered species and habitat; geological and geotechnical conditions; historic mining activity, subsurface stability, and mine-subsidence risk; drainage, stormwater, wetlands, and floodplain conditions; traffic and roads; noise during normal

operations and backup-generator use; lighting and visibility; air emissions; and fire protection and emergency-response needs.

- The County is not paying for the Project Zora studies. The County has not been informed who will prepare each study or what methods will be used.
- The County will request the Project Zora development team to share completed studies with the County and the public if it elects to proceed with permits for said site.
- The Project Zora development team indicated that some information needed to determine whether Project Zora will proceed may not be available until early 2027.

These statements reflect preliminary information supplied by the Project Zora development team and should not be treated as independently verified County findings. The proposed site, design, infrastructure requirements, impacts, costs, and potential benefits of Project Zora remain under review.

The County will continue to review Project Zora and the issues it may present, including potential effects on residents, utility customers, infrastructure, public services, the environment, and County finances. The nature and scope of any additional information or independent review that may be needed have not yet been determined. If additional review is required, the County may seek to have the Project Zora development team fund that review where authorized and appropriate.

The County has not determined that existing water, electric, road, or public-safety capacity is sufficient; that taxpayers or utility customers would not bear additional costs; or that Project Zora would produce the tax revenue, jobs, or other economic benefits described by the Project Zora development team. Those issues will require further information and consideration before any decisions are made.

If the Project Zora development team elects to proceed, any required zoning, development, incentive, infrastructure, or other governmental approvals will be considered by the appropriate public bodies under the laws, ordinances, and public processes applicable at that time. Those processes may include public meetings and opportunities for public comment. No approval or outcome has been promised.

The Commissioners have publicly stated that they will not enter into nondisclosure agreements concerning data center proposals.

The Commissioners have asked the Project Zora development team to establish and maintain a public-facing website for Project Zora. The Commissioners believe the Project Zora development team should be responsible for explaining Project Zora, publishing its studies and other materials, providing updates, and responding to questions from residents.

Any Project Zora website would be maintained by the Project Zora development team. It would not be an official County source and would not constitute County verification or endorsement of the information presented. The County would remain responsible for communicating official County actions, public meetings, and opportunities for public participation and for providing access to County records as required by Indiana law.

The Commissioners' first responsibility is to the people of Warrick County. They intend to proceed carefully, insist on reliable information, and consider the long-term effects on residents and taxpayers before any decision is made. Additional County information will be released when official action is taken or confirmed County information becomes available.