

**WOULD A DATA CENTER HERE MAKE MY
POWER BILL GO UP?**

Utilities do require that data centers guarantee 75-80% of their infrastructure costs be guaranteed or prepaid for a 15-20 year period, temporarily limiting the affect on power bills for other residents. Concerning the remainder of the funds necessary, utilities are required by the PSC to spread costs across the entire customer base equitably and based on PSC requirements. Thus, a data center in Garrard, Boyle, Jessamine, or any other KY County that has some amount of common electrical service territory would have the exact same effect on your power bill as if you lived adjacent the facility. Because of Kentucky's participation in a multi-state power grid, a data center in Ohio (for example) could be buying power generated in Kentucky, which could affect rate payers here, with no benefit at all. It is almost certain that data center development will occur in other counties that would affect generation at EW Brown, even if Mercer County says "No" to data centers and receives no benefit. Said more informally, our power bills will probably be impacted by data centers even if we don't have one here.

**WHAT BENEFITS DO DATA
CENTERS BRING?**

Transparently, the most direct benefit of a data center is tax revenue, primarily property tax revenue and taxes on data center equipment. A data center constructed in the area drawing attention could have an assessed building value of \$5 to \$10 billion, and equipment values of multiple more billions. The entire county including all existing industries has a total assessed property value of very roughly \$2 billion. Such a development could exhaust debt on civil infrastructure, fully fund new schools and community amenities, and provide citizens with dramatically improved services. Data centers typically don't require many government services once infrastructure consumption is offset. The projects typically catalyze other more traditional commercial growth opportunities as well i.e. retail, dining, lodging.

**WOULD A DATA CENTER PUT OUR
WATER SUPPLY AT RISK?**

Concerning water, data centers cool their machinery in one of two types of ways- either through evaporative cooling or closed-loop cooling systems. Both have benefits and drawbacks. Evaporative cooling can require lots of water, while closed loop systems require very little water but require much more electricity. In either circumstance, Mercer County Planning and Zoning Commission could set very strict restrictions on water source and use, and can require any prospective data center to work with the city and county to pay for their own infrastructure and offset the water/sewer capacity that they use. Many tech companies are willing to pay to improve infrastructure in their communities far beyond just that which they use.

**WE HAVE LAND AT THE BLUEGRASS
INNOVATION GATEWAY... WHY NOT
PUT A DATA CENTER THERE?**

There are many reasons why HMCIDA, is averse to siting a data center at the BIG. The community acquired the parcel because of its railroad and highway assets and how it can attract a high density of jobs. This is also why the legislature provided an \$11.5 million budget line item in 2024 to be used for infrastructure and why the site is a top priority for KCED and has garnered federal attention. The County's ordinance does not explicitly allow for data centers in the industrial zone. Doing so would require ordinance changes that could open up other areas of the county for data center development in some areas that are densely populated. The area in question is being offered for sale privately. Opening up other parts of the county for data centers would not dissuade the ownership from marketing the property anyway. The site in question is particularly attractive due to its location. Though the community's industrial site has access to tons of power (maybe more than would ever be needed depending on the industry), the existing transmission in the Bailey Pike area is more than 10x more robust with KU's planned expansion. Securing a comparable amount of power even 5 miles further away from the power plant could cost hundreds of millions of dollars.



**THE POSSIBILITY OF
DATA CENTERS IN
MERCER COUNTY, KY**



GETTY IMAGES

WINTER 2026

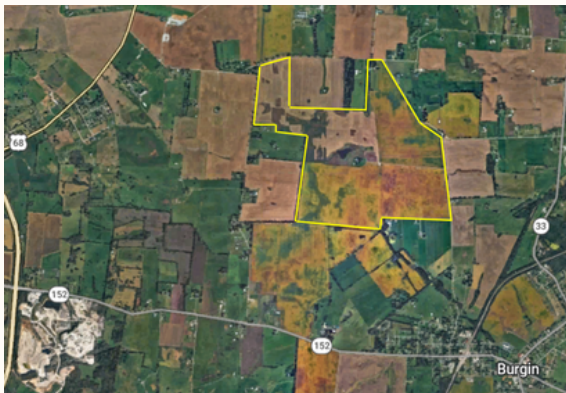
**PAMPHLET CREATED FROM
RESEARCH BY
HARRODSBURG MERCER COUNTY
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
WITH INPUT FROM
PARKWAY STRATEGIES**

FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY

WHAT TO KNOW

IS MERCER COUNTY "CONSIDERING" DATA CENTERS OR TRYING TO BRING THEM IN?

Harrodsburg, Burgin, Mercer Fiscal Court, and HMCIDA are **NOT** targeting data center development with their economic/industrial development efforts. Numerous inquiries have come in throughout 2025 and the community is a sought-after location, because we have extremely high voltage transmission lines, a power plant, and lots of industry already taking place. Additionally, the Commonwealth of Kentucky is a net exporter of power through its participation in the 13 State PJM grid. In late spring of 2025, a private landowner began marketing a farm in the Bailey Pike area just outside Burgin with help from an out-of-state broker to try to attract a buyer from the data center development space. Local officials have tried to learn all that they can but are not involved in incentivizing any transaction. In 2024, Kentucky's general assembly passed a very attractive statewide incentive to try to attract data centers to the state. Because the community is in a region that is quickly becoming a hotbed of data center speculation, Planning and Zoning hired a consultant from Parkway Strategies in Virginia to assist with analyzing the situation and sharing lessons learned from data center development in that state.



APPROXIMATE BOUNDARY OF MARKETING PROPERTY

CAN A DATA CENTER BE BUILT IN MERCER COUNTY CURRENTLY? WHAT ROLE DOES THE PLANNING COMMISSION PLAY?

Currently, not really, but it's unclear... zoning ordinances in Mercer County are very unclear even in the industrial zone about whether a data center could be built, though there's no specific prohibition against data centers in the ordinance.

The planning commission is examining the situation and is reviewing possible ordinance changes that would allow them to regulate the data center environment in Mercer County, to minimize or eliminate the negative impacts and resource burden that such facilities can place on a community's citizens. Ordinances and best practices from both pro- and anti-data center communities around the country are being examined.

A proposed ordinance change will require the planning commission to have a public hearing before the ordinance would be sent to the fiscal court for first and second readings prior to adoption.

WHAT DO DATA CENTERS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES LOOK LIKE?

Data centers in rural communities are made typically up of multiple buildings that would look like light industrial warehouses. They're generally +/-30 feet tall, and are most often set up using precast or tilt-up concrete walls. If there were to be one in Mercer County, planning and zoning can and would impose architectural/style requirements to promote architectural features consistent with the community's character, size and height restrictions, etc. Additionally, planning will take into account buffers, setbacks, and screening, especially from neighboring residences. Inside, they contain server racks, cooling equipment, and miles of fiber optic cable to carry information.

WHAT IS A DATA CENTER?

A "data center" is a high-tech warehouse that stores and powers thousands of computer servers that run artificial intelligence and store data that is saved on the "cloud." They are required for almost all apps on your phone to work, banking and the stock market, for streaming tv and movies, for social media to work, for shopping on Amazon or ordering a pizza online, even for email storage and for the internet to work. They are even necessary for automated processes that run smart homes and offices, like Ring doorbells, smart thermostats and locks, and more.

I HEAR DATA CENTERS DON'T PRODUCE ANY JOBS...

Data centers don't produce as many jobs per square foot as traditional manufacturing, but they do produce very high wage jobs. The farm listed for sale, according to research by Parkway Strategies and HMCIDA, would most likely create 100-250 full time jobs after construction is done and a facility is operational. These jobs would likely have an average salary of \$85-100K, many of which wouldn't require a 4-year degree. During construction, we estimate a project would require an average of 1,200 workers onsite daily, which could catalyze a lot of spending at local restaurants, hotels, and stores.

ARE DATA CENTERS LOUD?

Data centers require cooling that makes noise. They require generators that must be occasionally tested. During testing is when nearby properties would hear the most noise. Best practice data center planning and recommendations from Parkway suggest communities can require prospective developments to submit sound studies completed by third parties with no financial interest in the project to understand noise impacts, and communities can place maximum volume restrictions on projects to prevent any noise nuisance. These maximum volumes are typically determined by measured volumes at the site property lines.