

# Environmental Justice Council

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Meeting #27

Thursday, August 13, 2026, 6:30 pm

In Person location: Stockbridge MA

First Congregational Church

4 Main Street, Stockbridge, MA 01262



# Logistics and Agenda

# Environmental Justice Council

Meeting #27 • August 13, 2026 • 6:30 pm



## LOGISTICS

- ➔ Language Interpretation is being offered in: Español, Kreyòl ayisyen, 普通话, Português, Kriolu, Tiếng Việt, and American Sign Language (ASL)
  - To participate in English, click the “Interpretation” icon and select English.
  - Para entrar no canal em português, clique no ícone “Interpretation” e selecione “Portuguese”
  - Si alguien desea interpretación en español, haga clic en “Interpretation” y seleccione “Spanish”
  - Pa partisipa na Kriolu, klika na íkone "Intirpretason" y silisiona "Cape Verdean Creole"
  - Pou rantr nan chanèl kreyòl ayisyen an, klike sou ikòn “Interpretation” an epi chwazi “Haitian Creole”
  - 要以普通话参加会议，请单击口语图标并选择 “Chinese”.
  - Để vào kênh bằng tiếng Việt, hãy nhấp vào biểu tượng “Interpretation” và chọn “Vietnamese”.

- ➔ Please speak slowly.
- ➔ All attendees must select a language channel, even if viewing the presentation in English.



- ➔ If you would like a translated version of the slides, please go to the EJC website at: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/environmental-justice-council-ejc-meetings>

**THIS MEETING IS BEING RECORDED**



# Agenda

- |                                                              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| ▪ <b>Overview of Meeting, Logistics and Agenda</b>           |
| ▪ <b>Roll Call and Approval of Prior EJC Meeting Minutes</b> |
| ▪ <b>Public Comments</b>                                     |
| ▪ <b>Data Centers</b>                                        |
| ▪ <b>Public Comments (as time is permissible)</b>            |
| ▪ <b>Next Steps</b>                                          |
| ▪ <b>Adjourn</b>                                             |



## Approval of June 11, 2026, Meeting Minutes & Roll Call: EJ Council Members

- Madeline Fraser Cook
- Melissa Harding-Ferretti
- Cheryll Holley
- Caroline Hon
- Lydia Lowe
- Marcos Luna
- Peter Maathey
- María Belén Power
- Sofia Owen
- Jen Salinetti
- Patricia Spence
- Miles Gresham
- Harleen Marwah
- Paula Garcia

# Public Comments and Questions

*Please limit each comment to two minutes to  
allow time for others to speak*

# Data Centers



## Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Offices of Economic Development  
& Energy and Environmental Affairs

# Data Center Framework for Massachusetts

*August 2026*



# Framework Overview

- Data centers can strengthen the **Commonwealth's innovation economy** and competitiveness by supporting industries such as **biotechnology, finance, defense, and advanced computing**.
- Experience across the country demonstrates that **unchecked data center development can impose ratepayer costs and community impacts**, including:
  - Energy price hikes and constrained systems
  - Strained electric and water infrastructure
  - Air quality and public health impacts
  - Noise and land use conflicts
- The framework released on June 25<sup>th</sup> establishes **clear expectations for responsible data center development**.
- Projects seeking state tax incentives must demonstrate they will:
  - Fund the infrastructure they require,
  - Bring their own clean energy,
  - Protect environmental and community resources, and
  - Provide measurable public benefits.
- The framework also **guides state agencies, municipalities, and policymakers** while complementing existing permitting and regulatory requirements.

# Massachusetts and Data Center Governance

## 6.25.2026 Healey-Driscoll Statement of Expectations for Responsible Data Centers

*Governor Healey has paused acceptance of new sales tax exemption applications until stronger protections are in place to ensure projects do not increase energy costs and burdens, or harm communities and the environment.*



Massachusetts is establishing one of the nation's most comprehensive frameworks for data center development and operations.



Projects must demonstrate they can support innovation and economic competitiveness without increasing costs for ratepayers, straining public infrastructure, or harming communities or the environment.



Public incentives will be reserved for projects that meet these expectations and deliver clear public benefits.

# Data Center Framework Principles

1. No cost shifting of energy, grid, water, or infrastructure investments to ratepayers or taxpayers.
2. Clean energy supplies meet demand.
3. Maintain grid reliability without increasing congestion or stranded infrastructure costs.
4. Protect communities from environmental, health, and infrastructure impacts.
5. Use water responsibly without compromising local supply or quality.
6. Deliver quality jobs, local investment, and economic competitiveness.
7. Operate with transparency.

June 25, 2026

## HEALEY-DRISCOLL ADMINISTRATION STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS FOR RESPONSIBLE DATA CENTER DEVELOPMENT AND OPERATIONS IN MASSACHUSETTS

*Guidance for data centers seeking sales and use tax exemptions and expectations for  
broader data center development*

### OVERVIEW

Data centers present significant economic development opportunities for Massachusetts, including the creation of construction jobs, increased local property tax revenue, and investments in supporting infrastructure. They can also strengthen the Commonwealth's innovation economy by improving digital infrastructure and reducing latency for industries such as biotechnology, finance, defense, and advanced computing. In addition, New England's climate can provide natural efficiency advantages for these energy-intensive facilities.

At the same time, experience from across the country demonstrates that large-scale data center development can create challenges if not carefully planned and managed. Data centers require substantial investments in electric grid infrastructure and power generation resources, which can affect energy affordability and reliability for all energy consumers. Their development also raises climate, environmental, public health, and community concerns, including potential impacts on air quality, water resources, noise levels, and local land use.

Governor Healey's framework establishes principles and expectations for responsible data center development in Massachusetts that balances economic growth and innovation with protections for Massachusetts residents, businesses, and communities.

The framework is intended to provide clarity for data center developers considering projects in Massachusetts on responsible practices, and explicit expectations for those seeking the sales and use tax exemption under Massachusetts law (M.G.L. c. 64H, § 6(zz)). The framework will also be used to guide: (1) executive agencies and municipalities evaluating data center proposals; (2) discussions of executive agencies with the Legislature, municipalities, and others on data center policy; and (3) actions by the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) within its existing authority, including implementation of Executive Order 654.

This framework also supplements, and does not replace, existing state and local siting, permitting, and regulatory requirements. These include, among others: Energy Facilities Siting Board requirements for onsite generation facilities exceeding 25 MW (M.G.L. c.

| Expectation                                                   | Requirement Details                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Energy Supply (“Bring Your Own Clean Energy”)              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide or directly procure clean energy sufficient to meet facility demand, prioritizing on-site clean energy where practical.</li> <li>• Accelerate new clean energy development rather than competing for existing resources.</li> <li>• Protect ratepayers from costs associated with new load growth.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                     |
| 2. Energy Efficiency, Grid Flexibility, & System Optimization | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use industry-leading efficiency standards.</li> <li>• Participate in demand response and load flexibility programs.</li> <li>• Deploy solar, storage, and advanced energy management tools, supporting microgrids, geothermal networks, and virtual power plants where feasible.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                               |
| 3. Air Quality & Public Health                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimize air emissions and noise.</li> <li>• Reduce reliance on diesel backup generation where feasible.</li> <li>• Place particular emphasis on mitigating impacts on environmental justice communities.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 4. Water Use & Infrastructure Protection                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate sustainable water availability, and fund needed water and wastewater infrastructure improvements.</li> <li>• Maximize water efficiency and reuse.</li> <li>• Protect water quality in compliance with Massachusetts standards and requirements.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 5. Responsible Labor Practices & Job Creation                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create high-quality construction and permanent jobs, utilizing project labor or labor peace agreements</li> <li>• Support local hiring, training, and registered apprenticeships.</li> <li>• Provide safe working conditions and competitive wages.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 6. Community Benefit & Engagement                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage communities early and throughout development, aiming to deliver tangible benefits beyond required mitigation of harms.</li> <li>• Develop Community Benefit Plans and Agreements aligned with those established by the Office of Environmental Justice and Equity.</li> <li>• Avoid increasing burdens on disadvantaged communities and use the MassEnviroScreen to evaluate projects and potential cumulative impacts.</li> </ul> |
| 7. Local Economic Development & Innovation                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generate lasting economic value beyond construction.</li> <li>• Strengthen Massachusetts' innovation economy.</li> <li>• Prioritize Massachusetts suppliers.</li> <li>• Consider competing land uses and mitigate opportunity costs.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 8. Project Transparency                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publicly disclose project size, expansion plans, energy and water use, emissions-related information, hazardous materials</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

# Implementation and Next Steps

- State and regulatory agencies are expected determine how the framework can be applied within existing authorities.
- Seek expanded legislative authorities to enable conditioning of sales and use tax exemption.
- Develop guidance document to help municipalities evaluate and assess proposed data centers.





## Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Questions?

# Public Comments and Questions

*Please limit each comment to two minutes to  
allow time for others to speak*



WHAT'S  
NEXT?

## Next Steps & Adjourn

Next meeting date:

- October 8

Information on the EJC and its meetings can be found at

<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/environmental-justice-council-ejc>

ASL interpretations must be requested three weeks in advance of the meeting at [meetings@erg.com](mailto:meetings@erg.com)