

Title 17 Definition Edits

BoCC Public Hearing

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August 24, 2026



KitsapCounty

Department of Community Development

Schedule

**Jul 21, 2026
Combined PC
Meeting**

**Jul 22, 2026
DCD Update
to BoCC**

**Aug 24, 2026
BoCC Public
Hearing**

Adoption



Background

- Data centers are often large-scale development projects that can have substantial land use, resource, and infrastructure requirements.
- They require significant amounts of electricity and water for operation, which may have implications for local utilities, natural resources, and environmental conditions, including water quality.



Awaiting Guidance

- **Governor's Data Center Workgroup (Dec. 2025):** Recommends reporting requirements for new large utility loads and directing Ecology to develop data center siting and operating best practices that address infrastructure, environmental impacts, and Tribal rights in collaboration with agencies, industry, Tribes, local governments, and utilities.
- **Federal Executive Order 14365 (Dec. 2025):** Directs the U.S. Secretary of Commerce to review state AI laws for conflicts with a national, minimally burdensome AI policy framework; the required report has not yet been released.
- **County Associations:** Several groups from the Washington State Association of Counties to the National Association of Counties are collaborating to develop proposed legislation and best-practice guidance for counties.

The County is following the status of these efforts and is monitoring regional trends to understand potential approaches to regulating and managing data centers.



Purpose

- Jurisdictions around the nation have received applications for data centers submitted under use classifications such as research laboratories or warehouses. In some cases, the linkage between a proposed data center and the similar uses appear tenuous.
- The proposed revisions to these definitions in Title 17 will provide greater clarity regarding the intended scope of those uses in Kitsap County.



17.110.658 Research laboratory.

“Research laboratory” means a building or group of buildings used for scientific research, investigation, and testing, or experimentation, but not facilities for the manufacture or sale of products, except as incidental to the main purpose of the laboratory. Research laboratories are characterized by the presence of researchers, technicians, scientists, engineers, or similar personnel conducting research, investigative, testing, or experimental activities within the laboratory, testing areas, or related workspaces. A research laboratory may include associated offices, equipment, and support spaces directly related to research functions. Facilities whose primary function is equipment operation, utility service provision, storage, warehousing, or other activities not involving ongoing research, investigation, testing, or experimentation by on-site personnel are not research laboratories.



17.110.743 Warehousing and distribution.

“Warehousing and distribution” means a use involving a facility where only physical goods ~~are received and/or stored for delivery to other firms or the final customer.~~, physical merchandise, physical materials, or physical equipment are stored for subsequent distribution, sale, transfer, or use elsewhere. A use that does not maintain an inventory consisting exclusively of physical goods shall not be considered warehousing and distribution.



Thank You

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