

Tracy Grant
47532 138th Street
Corona, SD 57227

Studio Imagine
102 N. Dakota Street
Milbank, SD 57252

I oppose large data centers and the proposed high-voltage transmission lines in Grant and Roberts Counties. These projects could permanently change our rural communities while placing the greatest burden on nearby homeowners, farmers, landowners, and existing utility customers. Before anything moves forward, residents deserve clear answers, strong protections, and a meaningful role in the decision.

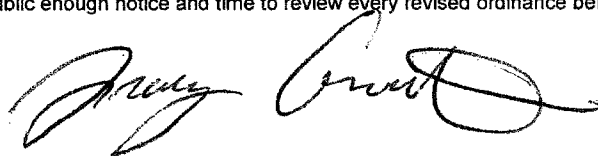
I am concerned that public funding and private land rights may be committed before residents know whether these projects are fully financed, necessary, and certain to be completed. Grant and Roberts Counties should require firm construction deadlines, automatic expiration of unused easements, full land restoration, public disclosure of all subsidies and beneficiaries, and strong protections against land being tied up for a project that is delayed, transferred, or abandoned.

My concerns include:

- **Water use:** Large data centers can use substantial amounts of water for cooling. A water-use ratio is not the same as a firm limit on the total number of gallons used.
- **Electricity demand and cost:** Large data centers can require enormous amounts of electricity. Families, farms, and local businesses should not be forced to pay higher rates for new substations, transmission lines, or other infrastructure built to serve private companies.
- **Homes and property:** Large transmission lines and industrial facilities can affect rural views, farming operations, property values, future land use, and the peaceful enjoyment of nearby homes.
- **Noise:** Cooling systems, transformers, substations, generators, and round-the-clock operations may create constant noise, including during nighttime hours.
- **Setbacks:** Setbacks should be clear, mandatory, and measured from homes, property lines, schools, churches, livestock facilities, and other sensitive locations. Weak or confusing language could leave residents without the protection they expect. We want a MINIMUM of a 2,000 foot setback!
- **Roads and public services:** Heavy construction may damage roads and increase demands on fire departments, emergency services, water systems, and local government. Developers should be required to pay all related costs.
- **Long-term responsibility:** Companies should be required to provide financial guarantees, cleanup plans, decommissioning funds, water monitoring, and noise testing. Taxpayers should not be left responsible if a company closes, sells, or fails to keep its promises.
- **Connected development:** The data-center ordinance and major transmission projects are moving forward during the same period. Residents deserve a complete explanation of how future industrial power demand, substations, and transmission expansion may be connected.

What I am asking the county to do:

- Do not approve a large data center or major transmission route until the full effects have been independently studied.
- Adopt stronger requirements for water use, noise, setbacks, infrastructure, emergency planning, and financial protection.
- Require developers to pay all project-related costs so existing utility customers and taxpayers are protected.
- Create a standing citizen committee that gives residents, farmers, landowners, and local businesses a formal role in drafting and reviewing county rules.
- Give the public enough notice and time to review every revised ordinance before a final vote.



8-6-2026

Christian Reimche
15024 482nd Ave
Milbank, SD 57252

I oppose putting large data centers and high-voltage transmission lines in Grant County! My home has already fallen in the pathway of proposed Transmission lines. We were not made aware of the Data Center issue until last minute! We are not even been given a chance or time! I do not believe the public has been adequately notified!

These projects would affect farmland, homes, water, property values, roads, electric rates, and the quiet rural way of life people moved here to protect. The public is being asked to accept major changes without enough clear information about who benefits, who pays, how much land will be affected, or what happens if the projects are delayed or never completed!

- Data centers can use large amounts of water and electricity.
- Families, farmers, and local businesses should not have to pay higher utility rates to support private companies.
- Large power lines can interfere with farming, reduce the use and value of property, and permanently change the landscape.
- Cooling equipment, generators, transformers, and substations can create constant noise.
- Weak setback rules could place industrial equipment too close to homes, schools, churches, livestock, and property lines.
- Developers should be required to pay for road damage, emergency services, water impacts, cleanup, and removal of abandoned equipment.
- Landowners should not be pressured into permanent easements before permits, funding, routes, and construction dates are final.
- Any easement should expire if the project is not built by a firm deadline.
- The public deserves to know how much government funding or tax assistance is involved, which companies will receive it, and who is responsible if the project fails.

The data-center ordinance and the transmission projects are moving forward at the same time. Officials may call them separate projects, but residents deserve a full explanation of how they may be connected.

Once farmland, water, property rights, and local control are lost, they may never be recovered. Do not move forward until the people who live here are fully informed and properly protected.



8-6-26

Steve Berkner

From: Amanda Nigg <amanda@farmfitmomma.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 6, 2026 4:51 PM
To: Steve Berkner
Subject: Public Comment - Data Center Ordinance 2026-01

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

EXTERNAL EMAIL

To the Grant County Zoning Officer, Planning Commission, and Board of Commissioners,

My name is Amanda Nigg. My husband Louis and I farm in northeast South Dakota, and I am writing to submit my comment on proposed Data Center Ordinance 2026-01 ahead of the noon deadline on August 7.

I want to be clear that I am not here to say no to progress. I am here because the protections in this draft are not yet strong enough to safeguard the things this county cannot replace: our water table, our farmland, and the aquifer that every operation in this region depends on. Water and productive ground are not renewable once they are compromised. For families like ours whose living and whose children's future are tied directly to this land, the margin for error on those protections is very small.

I am also concerned about the process itself. Residents are being asked to comment on a nearly finished draft only days before a vote, rather than being included while these rules are still being written. Ordinances of this magnitude, governing water use, setbacks, and infrastructure that will outlast all of us, deserve real citizen input at the drafting stage, not just at the finish line.

I respectfully ask the Commission to do two things. First, strengthen this ordinance so its water, setback, and infrastructure protections genuinely hold. Second, establish a standing citizen committee, with landowners at the table, that has a formal role in shaping these rules going forward.

Thank you for your service to Grant County and for the opportunity to be heard on behalf of the families who live and farm here.

Respectfully,
Amanda Nigg
46356 125th Street, Sisseton, SD 57262
amanda@farmfitmomma.com



Steve Berkner

From: KARI HOPKINS <only4kari@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 6, 2026 5:29 PM
To: Steve Berkner
Subject: Data centers

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

EXTERNAL EMAIL

Hi Steve,
I see we are supposed to respond to the data center possibility in our area. Please research water usage and affects on livestock and our community. I WOULD VOTE No. I am completely against data centers.
Thank you,
Kari Hopkins.

Sent from my iPhone

Steve Berkner

From: Alan Gengler <ajgengler22@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 6, 2026 8:00 PM
To: Steve Berkner
Subject: I don't think AI Data centers are a good thing. They take a lot of water and electricity and usually want tax breaks instead of paying taxes. There should be rules that the people should have to vote on whether they can be allowed in the county.

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

EXTERNAL EMAIL

Steve Berkner

From: Barbara McGee <bhutch1344@me.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 6, 2026 9:31 PM
To: Steve Berkner
Subject: Data center

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

EXTERNAL EMAIL

Barb McGee here. I live in Milbank. What are you thinking? The city of Milbank can't even find decent water for their homes. And now a data center. It's amazing that tomorrow is the 7th and this is the first I've heard of this which I'm sure means most of the people of this county haven't heard this. Seems like it's being run through without people even being aware. This needs to be a vote of the people of this county not of our commissioners. This is blatantly wrong. No data center.

Steve Berkner

From: Emma DeBoer <emmakdeboer@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 6, 2026 9:45 PM
To: Steve Berkner
Subject: Date Center Ordinance

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

EXTERNAL EMAIL

Dear Steve,

I am writing as a concerned lifelong resident of Milbank, South Dakota, regarding the prospect of a data center in our county.

I have several concerns regarding the potential impact of this facility:

- Water Usage: Given our town's existing clean water issues, how will a data center with high water consumption affect our local reserves?
- Noise Pollution: Have there been studies on how the sound decibels generated by the center will impact local wildlife?
- Power Grid Strain: Will there be new infrastructure to support and maintain the significant power required to run the facility?

I will be attending the joint public hearing on Monday August 10th. I hope to hear how some of these issues are being addressed.

Best regards,

Emma Steinlicht

Steve Berkner

From: rollie flores <rollieflores@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 6, 2026 10:41 PM
To: Steve Berkner
Subject: Fwd:

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

EXTERNAL EMAIL

----- Forwarded message -----

From: rollie flores <rollieflores@gmail.com>
Date: Thu, Aug 6, 2026, 10:38 PM
Subject:
To: <steve.berkner@grantcountsd.us>

NO data centers in Grant county!

Steve Berkner

From: Laurie Lippert <lzl6@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 6, 2026 11:14 PM
To: Steve Berkner
Subject: Ordinances

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

EXTERNAL EMAIL

Hello Steve,

I have done extensive study on data centers and been privileged to testify before the SD legislature this past session and have given several public presentations on the subject. This is an industry that poses numerous risks to the regions in which they build. Sadly, there are no federal regulations to protect you or your fellow Grant County citizens and why it is imperative that you enact ordinances to prevent harm to the people. Since zoning is one of your areas of administration, you must not allow a data center within 5 miles of any residents. The noise emitted is a detriment to both health and quality of life. These centers have cooling fans that run sustained decibels that are beyond the 40 recommended by NIH for healthy hearing. The infra-sound (that under 200hz) is not heard in decibels but registers in the body as pressure causing vertigo, tinnitus, nausea, sleep deprivation, stress, cardiac issues, blood pressure increases, and anxiety due to higher cortisol release. There are some convincing studies emerging of cognitive decline in children and possible bone density loss. The water issues with data centers are multiple. Even if a claim of "closed loop" is made, this cooling system requires toxic chemicals to be in the loop to prevent calcification and bacterial build up. This contaminated water cannot be safely released into public water filtration systems without substantial cost to the city. The only other option is dumping, which risks ground and river water contamination. The NET water use must include what is needed for the increased fuel production to run the closed loop as it requires enormous power to operate. Utility bills of citizens will indeed rise unless there is an ordinance to the contrary. Utility infrastructure must be added for grid expansion and is above the kilo watt hour increases. Diesel generators need strict regulations with oversight and enforcement as the particulates they emit are full of carcinogenic chemicals such as benzene and nitrates. The noise from the testing and inevitable use of these generators during peak power times like this summer cannot be overstated. Expect non stop complaints, plummeting property values, and increased health problems and medical costs. Many data centers and cities are being sued for these damages and there are several examples of city councilors and county commissioners being recalled by citizens for the pain inflicted due to lack of regulations. This is only scratching the surface. Please consider requiring any applicant to cover INDEPENDENT health, environmental, and economic impact studies from which effective ordinances can be created. This would go a long way to prevent future problems for the people of Grant County and indeed for you and your office. I apologize for the length of this email, but it is very important. There is a reason why there is overwhelming nation wide, bi-partisan opposition to this industry. Best wishes.

Laurie Lippert
LZL6@HOTMAIL.COM
District 10
Sioux Falls

Steve Berkner

From: Travis & Becky Swezey <tbswezey@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 7, 2026 12:11 AM
To: Steve Berkner
Subject: No DATA CENTERS in Grant county!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

EXTERNAL EMAIL

We vote, No data center in grant county. This will not be good here.
Travis and Becky Swezey
8/7/2026 at 12:09 AM.

Steve Berkner

From: Travis & Becky Swezey <tbswezey@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 7, 2026 12:14 AM
To: Steve Berkner
Subject: Re: No DATA CENTERS in Grant county!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

EXTERNAL EMAIL

Travis and Becky Swezey
Twin Brooks, South Dakota.

On Fri, Aug 7, 2026, 12:10 AM Travis & Becky Swezey <tbswezey@gmail.com> wrote:

We vote, No data center in grant county. This will not be good here.

Travis and Becky Swezey

8/7/2026 at 12:09 AM.

Friday 0558 August 7, 2026

Kevin R. Kabrud

Zoning Officer Steve Berkner
210 East 5th Avenue
Milbank, SD 57252

Subject: Input part 1 Milbank Ordinance for
AI/Data centers.

Good morning Steve Berkner Zoning Officer,

Below are some of the things I have pulled from my notes and references. All and much more need to be addressed immediately and be put in an Ordinance to protect Milbank residents.

I believe your openness will pay big dividends, but your headaches are only beginning, but an Ordinance in place will help Councils and communities negotiate or say no thank you, from whatever AI lobbyists spin and they will sugar coat it, seen it on PBS TV legislative sessions.

Below is good ammo for the predatory nature of these AI corporations. Below will be helpful for Opponents and Councils (City/County) on making monumental decisions on AI/Data Centers. Hint: Gives a way out if Milbank doesn't want to participate.

One of the most important 1st steps is to be **transparent** to the residents, if you're not Opposition will be quick, focused, hostile, and committed. Participation and the power of voting takes the burden off councils.

You have to enact an ***Ordinance Banning Non-Disclosure Agreements** NOW! If you do not transparency is compromised and undermining between people and councils will happen, and then dissension happens. Currently there are many articles where constituents are voting out Public Servants.

NDAs are used by AI/Data Centers for various reasons, and once signed they will use them against you, not a good deal. Once Constituents question it, well good luck.

Immediately a **Moratorium** in writing must be enacted. I suggest 2yrs based on how fast technology is changing and give Milbank time. If you don't Big Tech will continue to hound Milbank.

Rezoning: proceed carefully. As these Big Tech lobbyists infiltrate meetings and the request to rezone Ag Land to Industry land is a telltale that land purchases have happened, you won't be able to figure out who purchased it, and that's the AI/Data site and residents won't be happy.

Demand a **Decommissioning Bond** (money put up front by the AI/Data ctr) for when Big Tech leaves because it's no longer profitable, especially with advancements in technology. This is a huge one and will safeguard (get it?) Milbank tax money.

South Dakota **Constitution**, Article VI Bill of Rights. **§1. Inherent rights.**.....inherent rights, among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty....of happiness....and....governments....deriving their just powers from the **consent** of the governed. **§5.** Free Speech.

Codified Law SD 46-1-1,2, Water property of the People, and **SDCL** 46-1-5 water for domestic purposes is priority.

SD Const. Art. XI § 3 Corporate tax power of state not suspended: The power to tax corporations and corporate property **shall not** be surrendered or suspended by any contract or grant to which the state shall be a party.

SD Const. Art. XI §17. Taxation without consent – Uniformity. all taxation shall be equal and uniform. So, AI/Data centers get huge tax breaks and the People don't.

SD Codified law 49-41B-22:

Applicant's **Burden of Proof** (no Threat) "will not pose a threat of serious injury to the environment nor inhabitants....

18 U.S.C. § 201, Bribery of public officials and witnesses, Ch. 11-Bribery, Graft, and Conflicts of Interests.

Hopefully last resort, residents don't rise up and **vote out any public servant that utters the word** AI/Data center.

Sound Decibels need to be in writing too.

Do not think of using the **"People's" money**, taxpayers' money review SD Const. above. No tax breaks, tax incentives, or TIFs. These need to be **voted on**.

Also think hard about 1July'26 Senate Bill 228 signed this Legislative session. **SB 228** An Act to modify provisions for a tax increment financing district (TIF).

Constituents are realizing AI/Data centers are not economic development but **economic disaster**. It is decreased water supplies, increased Utility bills as well as air, water, noise, light, soil **pollution**, and 0-5 jobs.

Recap:

- **Transparency.**
- ***Ordinance Banning Non-Disclosure Agreements NOW!**
- **Moratorium NOW!**
- **Rezoning**
- **Decommissioning Bond**
- **SD Constitution, Art VI Bill of Rights. §1. Inherent rights**
- **Codified Law SD 46-1-1,2, (Water)**
- SDCL 46-1-5 (water for priority)**
- **SD Const. Art. XI § 3 Corporate tax power of state not suspended**
- **SD Const. Art. XI §17. Taxation without consent - Uniformity**
- **SD Codified law 49-41B-22: Applicant's Burden of Proof**
- **18 U.S.C. § 201, Bribery of public officials**
- **No tax breaks, tax incentives, or TIFs.**
- **1July'26 Senate Bill 228 (TIFs)**
- **Sound Decibels**

*If sample below meets resistance it's a sure sign an NDA(s) has been signed.

*1. Prepare a simple ordinance. Something as simple as, "All county elected officials and staff are prohibited from entering into any agreement obligating any party to not disclose the contents of any communication of whatever form involving a public matter or likely to come before the public. Violation of this ordinance shall result in immediate disqualification and removal from office and/or immediate termination of employment for cause."

2. Present to a Commissioner for placement on the Commissioners next meeting agenda for action.

I am a South Dakotan, born here, Resident, Voter, Taxpayer, Army Veteran 23yrs. svc, 2 Deploy., 3rd Gen. Farm owner.

I know you are busy so **thank you** for taking a moment to read this. Read the SD and US Constitution often, the Bible to gain your bearings, stay "Street Smart", and go ugly early; start negotiations with NO.

Sincerely, Kevin.

Zoning Officer Steve Berkner
210 East 5th Avenue
Milbank, SD 57252

Subject: Input part 2 Milbank Ordinance
for AI/Data centers.

Good morning Steve Berkner Zoning Officer,

More Ordinance items. Keep in mind that there is so much needed to protect Milbank.

Also Milbank is in control, not the lobbyists/representatives. Example; one AI/Data ctr became so invasive that the City in Plymouth Township PA piled on conditions to be met.

More important items with a Recap at the end. Keep in mind more will come out in the City meetings.

1Jul'26 Senate Bill 135

An Act to protect residents from increased utility costs and utility shortages caused by data centers and clarify authority to regulate data centers.

Set Back Ordinances probably need to be updated for Milbank residents safety. **13 miles** for health of humans, wildlife, and livestock.

A new identified trend "**Bait and switch** techniques; example; lobbyists purpose a 25 Megawatt then switch to Hyper-scale during construction.

What is this AI/Data ctr going to do for Milbank? Primary outsider contractor Jobs? Jobs after construction? Pollution? Infrastructure Repairs? Tax relief? Milbank needs to demand a **C.B.A.(Community Economic Benefits Agreement)** be conducted, public review, voted on, signed.

Ask about cost of every **4yr "Refresh"** in TI equip. Tax revenue loss? Trucked in? Landfill pollution.

Ask about and nail down what their negotiated **electricity** rate is. Centers receive lower kwh rates vs public.

– Energy/Utility cost for each phase. It will matter especially on Milbank residents.

- Ask about new “zero-water”/LN2 cooling technology. They will beat around the bush on this.
- Waste water disposal of cooling system? If not done correctly they will pollute residents groundwater wells, pollute the Ogallala Aquifer, and Milbank’s water treatment plant.
- No water for landscaping, this is a huge consumption, as much as their cooling system.
- Dangerous emission of **E.M.F.** (Electric Magnetic Fields) on health, residents, wildlife, agricultural livestock and equipment. There will be unexplained and unexpected electric motor problems, electrical components not working properly. This needs to be addressed.

Keep in mind that AI/Data centers are “**Heat Islands**”, they will increase Air and Ground ambient temperatures by 5° to 20°.

Noteworthy for Property Rights.

HB 1080, 81st Session Legislative

February 17, 2006 Mike Rounds approved, An Act to restrict the use of eminent domain.....(1) For transfer to any private person, nongovernmental entity, or other public private business entity; or.....

Milbank citizens and surrounding communities need to be protected because they will incur all the liabilities noise, air, **water contamination, Cancer**, insurance, taxes, legal fees, E.M.S. training, road repair, devalue housing, exhaust plume over residents

Recap:

- Senate Bill 135 1Jul’26.
- “**Bait and switch**” trending.
- Set Back Ordinances.
- **C.B.A.** (Community Economic Benefits Agreement).
- **4yr “Refresh”** in Tech equip.
- Their negotiated lower **electricity rate**?
- Energy/Utility cost for each phase.
- New “zero-water”/LN2 cooling technology.
- **E.M.F.** (Electric Magnetic Fields).
- “**Heat Islands**”.
- **HB 1080** Property Right/Eminent Domain

I am a South Dakotan, born here, Resident, Voter, Taxpayer, Army Veteran 23yrs. svc, 2 Deploy., 3rd Gen. Farm owner.

I know you are busy so **thank you** for taking a moment to read this. Read the SD and US Constitution often, the Bible to gain your bearings, stay "Street Smart", and go ugly early; start negotiations with NO.

Sincerely, Kevin.

Decommissioning

Friday 0619 August 7, 2026

Kevin R. Kabrud

Zoning Officer Steve Berkner
210 East 5th Avenue
Milbank, SD 57252

Subject: Input part 3 Milbank Ordinance
for AI/Data centers.

Good morning Steve Berkner Zoning Officer,

I believe a **Decommissioning bond** is one of the most important items that needs to be demanded to protect Milbank's tax money when this AI center bubble bursts.

Decommissioning bond.

This is becoming an increasingly important with strong contracting or ordinance when dealing with AI/Data centers. Communities state wide must have a requirement for a Decommissioning Bond for all data centers, even if they already exists.

It would require a Bond be set up to cover the removal of the data center, including the fuel storage tanks, the generators, all toxic waste on the site and the building. Then return the land to it's original condition.

This would prevent the operator of a data center from selling it to a smaller company that is designed to go bankrupt and leaving the clean up to public and government.

Also in the top 5 most important topics in the AI/Data center Ordinance should be;

– A City Ordinance Banning Non-Disclosure Agreements (**NDAs**). AI/Data centers and Lobbyists/Reps are silently secretive, are try to stay unregulated/unrestricted/no guardrails.

– A 2-5 year **Moratorium** to give Milbank time in this Drought, public input/planning, environmental, etc.

– **C.B.A.** (Community Economic Benefits Agreement). Milbank needs to demand this. Don't faultier on this.

– **No tax break**, no tax incentive, no grants, No TIFs. These AI/Data corporations are the wealthiest in the World; are foreign backed, pursue Delaware out-of-state tax protections and billions of dollars in secret off shore accounts. SD **Const. Art. XI § 3 Corporate tax power of state not suspended.**

I believe the Inputs for Milbank's AI/Data centers Ordinance I have been emailing you will protect Milbank, surrounding communities, and you. Remember Milbank is in charge and never asked for a AI Center!

I am a South Dakotan, born here, Resident, Voter, Taxpayer, Army Veteran 23yrs. svc, 2 Deploy., 3rd Gen. Farm owner.

I know you are busy so **thank you** for taking a moment to read this.

Read the SD and US Constitution often, the Bible to gain your bearings, stay "Street Smart", and go ugly early; start negotiations with NO.

Sincerely, Kevin.

Friday 0607 August 7, 2026

Kevin R. Kabrud

Closed Loop System

Friday 0626 August 7, 2026

Kevin R. Kabrud

Zoning Officer Steve Berkner
210 East 5th Avenue
Milbank, SD 57252

Subject: Input part 4 (Closed Loop System)

Page 7 of 8 Kevin R. Kabrud letters

Milbank Ordinance for AI/Data centers.

Good morning Steve Berkner Zoning Officer,

You may know this but I wanted to bring this important item up.

Recently between February '26 and July '26
Meta contaminated the Cheyenne Wyoming
City's wastewater system.

On July 2, 2026 Cheyenne made an announcement that Meta's data center hazardous
chemical fill-and-flush and closed loop syst. operation wastewater is contaminated with
Cupriavidus gilardii.

This bacterium is interfering with the water reclamation facility contaminating the reuse
water system in the Treatment Plant.

Cost to the Taxpayers for cleanup, damage, resident's health, and trust in City Gov't, who
knows, but it's not good.

A Very short Synopsis of Closed Loop.

- Closed Loop is not Closed Loop cooling system.
- C.L. water has anti-corrosive fluid, anti-scaling, bio-sides, contaminates in it.
- Eventually Flushed back into the aquifer, out to rivers or from where it came.
- Water Treatment Plants can't fully filter or clean the chemicals used in a C.L. clean again!
- Contaminates all well water, resident's, agricultural, and surrounding communities.

Recap: "Closed loop" is not the same thing as "zero pollution." Aberdeen needs to
demand an **Environmental Impact Statement**.

When evaluating any proposed data center, it's worth looking at the actual environ-mental
permits rather than assuming a single engineering feature answers every
concern.

Sincerely Kevin

Steve Berkner

From: Shari <noloc5@itcmilbank.com>
Sent: Friday, August 7, 2026 7:59 AM
To: Steve Berkner

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

EXTERNAL EMAIL

This is really a no-brainer. No one wants a data center around them put it out in western South Dakota in the middle of nowhere where it won't bother anyone, do this for the people don't do this for the money. Look into your art and do the right thing politics out of this say no to the data center.! Shari and Paul Karels Sent from my iPhone

Steve Berkner

From: Cealy <cealyeckberg23@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 7, 2026 7:54 AM
To: Steve Berkner
Subject: Data center

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

EXTERNAL EMAIL

No!!!! Data centers. No! No!

August 7th, 2026

Steve Berkner
Grant County Zoning Office
210 E 5th Ave
Milbank, SD 57252

Dear Steve Berkner,

We are very concerned about the potential development of data centers in Grant County. We both have agricultural backgrounds and currently are dairy farmers in Grant County. We feel agricultural land should be used to grow crops and graze cattle, not for data centers.

The issues we have with data centers include:

- increased noise pollution
- extreme water usage
- intense use of electricity
- mass construction issues
- strain on local

When more electrical lines are installed near our dairy operation, consequences will be:

- lower milk production
- animal breeding issues
- health issues, especially cancer
- poorer electrical service
- higher electrical costs

We would appreciate the opportunity to discuss this matter further and explore alternatives solutions to help out our agricultural industry.

Thank you,

Brian and Alexandra Fonder
14241 479th Ave
Milbank, SD 57252

Steve Berkner

From: Hopkins, Ryan William - SDSU Student <ryan.hopkins20626@jacks.sdstate.edu>
Sent: Friday, August 7, 2026 9:34 AM
To: Steve Berkner
Subject: Data centers and transmission lines

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

EXTERNAL EMAIL

Hello Steve,

I am writing today to voice my concerns about data centers and the many negative effects they bring with them, with little to no benefit to the communities that they are built in. They may bring in outside construction workers and contractors for a short time, but after they are constructed, they will have few to no jobs for the community. The harm they cause is immeasurable, including destroying airable farmland, causing animals to have stillborn young, noise and heat pollution, and massive water usage on an aquifer that is already being strained by the usage in the community.

They cause the electric and utilities cost to go up for everyone. Data centers have no benefit to the citizens, but only to the billionaires who push them and receive all the tax cuts a normal person pays for.

Building giant transmission lines for these, using eminent domain is also un-American. They provide no benefits to the public, and should not be used to steal private land.

I realize you and most of the county commissioners are older and will not feel the full negative effects of one of these being constructed on our area, but their children and grandchildren will.

I urge you to increase the restrictions on zoning data centers to measures that make it untenable for them to infiltrate our community.

Sincerely,
Grant county resident,
Ryan Hopkins

[Get Outlook for Android](#)

Steve Berkner

From: Twila Mursu <twila.mursu@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 7, 2026 9:53 AM
To: Steve Berkner
Subject: Data Center proposal

EXTERNAL EMAIL

Twila Mursu
48155 143rd St

Big Stone City, SD 57216

Twila.mursu@gmail.com

August 7, 2026

Grant County Planning and Zoning

Board of Grant County Commissioners

Milbank, Grant County, South Dakota

Subject: Strong Opposition to Proposed Data Center Development in [Community Name]

Dear Members of the Grant County Planning Commission and Board of Grant County Commissioners,

I am writing to express my deep concern and firm opposition to the proposed data center project in our community. While I recognize the importance of modern technology infrastructure, placing a heavy industrial data center in Grant County South Dakota is the wrong direction for our local future.

Our community should reject this proposal for several critical reasons:

Severe strain on resources: Massive data centers consume extraordinary amounts of local electricity and water, which risks driving up utility bills for local families and straining our public grid.

Environmental and noise impacts: The continuous, loud hum of industrial cooling fans and backup diesel generators will ruin the peace, quiet, and rural/residential character of our area.

Poor return on investments for residents: These facilities use vast amounts of land but create very few permanent, local jobs once construction finishes, offering little benefit to everyday taxpayers.

Incompatible zoning: This type of heavy, disruptive development does not belong near where people live, farm, and enjoy our local environment.

Lack of local benefits: These facilities create very few permanent jobs after construction while transferring long-term environmental and infrastructure costs onto local residents.

Instead of rushing into decisions that permanently alter our landscape, I urge you to vote NO on this project, or at minimum, enact a formal moratorium to thoroughly study the long term impact these facilities have on local communities.

REQUESTED ACTION :

Before any permanent harm is done, I ask the governing body to protect our residents by enacting a temporary moratorium on data center approvals, updating local zoning ordinances to ban or strictly restrict these facilities and voting NO on the current data center proposal.

Thank you for your time, your public service, and commitment to protect the future of Grant County. I look forward to your response and to speaking at the upcoming public comment session.

Sincerely,

Twila Mursu

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TWILA

## Steve Berkner

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**From:** Alex Hopkins <lilirvinhopkins@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, August 7, 2026 10:11 AM  
**To:** Steve Berkner  
**Subject:** No on Data Centers

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

### EXTERNAL EMAIL

Any size Data Center is going to have a large negative impact on aquifers and local water systems. To me this would be a bad deal for our community, so I just want to display my opposition to data centers.  
Thank you

## Steve Berkner

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**From:** Jo Gilliland <jogilliland46@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, August 7, 2026 10:11 AM  
**To:** Steve Berkner  
**Subject:** DATA CENTER

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

### EXTERNAL EMAIL

No Data Centers in Grant County!!!!!! They will not make our county better. Fix the streets, clean up the water, more childcare for working families, better salaries for healthcare. I could name more. What good is a Data Centers?

Jo Gilliland, 80 years old

## Steve Berkner

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**From:** ltdpublish@gmail.com  
**Sent:** Friday, August 7, 2026 10:30 AM  
**To:** Steve Berkner  
**Subject:** Data center high transmission line ordinance proposed changes

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

### EXTERNAL EMAIL

Good morning Steve,  
This letter is to express my concerns as a Milbank city resident on any proposed data center and or high transmission line ordinance in or near where I live.

#### DATA CENTER CONCERNS

The common concerns with status centers are threefold — excessive water usage, excessive power usage, and excessive noise. If the county can use best practices to either ameliorate or eliminate such concerns, and delineate how those issues would be addressed, I'd very much appreciate a response or an explanation in the upcoming planning and zoning meeting.

#### HIGH TRANSMISSION POWERLINES

The issue with such lines are the negative health impacts of high electro magnetic fields as well as possible stray voltage. If the county can use best practices to either ameliorate or eliminate such possible harms, and delineate how these issues would be addressed, I'd very much appreciate a response or an explanation in the said upcoming meeting.

Thank you,  
David Copelan  
Milbank, Sd  
Sent from my iPhone

**Steve Berkner**

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**From:** Tanya Schneck <schnecktanya@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, August 7, 2026 10:57 AM  
**To:** Steve Berkner  
**Subject:** Data center ordinance

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**EXTERNAL EMAIL**

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I am writing to express my concerns about the proposed data center near Milbank.

I understand that projects like this may bring investment and some economic opportunities. However, I believe it is important to carefully consider the long-term impacts on our community before moving forward.

I am concerned about the increased demand on our electrical grid and water resources, impacts on nearby farmland and wildlife, and whether the long-term benefits to local residents will outweigh these costs. Milbank is a close-knit rural community, and I hope decisions made today will preserve the character and quality of life that make this area such a wonderful place to live and raise a family and for future generations.

I respectfully ask that community input be given significant weight and that all environmental, infrastructure, and economic impacts be thoroughly evaluated before any final decisions are made.

Thank you for your time, your service, and your consideration of the concerns of local residents.

Im sure I also have to learn about both sides also and the benefits not just the negatives.

Thanks

Tanya Schneck

Brooke Mielitz  
48555 147<sup>th</sup> Street  
Big Stone City, SD 57216  
Brooke.emmalee.johnson@gmail.com  
605-949-0247  
08/07/2026  
Subject: Support for a 2,000-Foot Transmission Line Setback in South Dakota

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing regarding the proposed transmission line projects currently being considered in South Dakota and my support for establishing a minimum 2,000-foot setback from homes and businesses whenever possible.

While I understand the importance of maintaining and improving energy infrastructure, I believe major transmission lines should be planned responsibly and routed in ways that minimize impacts to rural residents, farms, businesses, future development, and local communities.

Large transmission structures placed too close to homes and businesses can negatively impact:

- Property values
- Scenic rural viewsheds
- Future residential and commercial growth
- Hunting, tourism, and recreational businesses
- Farm operations and aerial agriculture
- Community character and quality of life

I respectfully ask decision makers, utility companies, and state officials to support responsible routing practices and adopt stronger setback standards that better protect South Dakota landowners and communities.

A 2,000-foot setback would help reduce conflicts, preserve future development opportunities, and encourage more balanced long-term infrastructure planning across the state.

I also ask that proposed routes near expanding communities, airports, homes, farms, and businesses receive additional review and consideration before final routes are approved.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Brooke Mielitz

**Steve Berkner**

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**From:** sime@sstel.net  
**Sent:** Friday, August 7, 2026 11:26 AM  
**To:** Steve Berkner  
**Subject:** Data Center Ordinances

**EXTERNAL EMAIL**

Hello,

I am Brenda Sime and live at 16315 484th Ave Revillo, SD and a concerned Grant County citizen regarding Data Center ordinances. What is the amount of electricity, water and land that a Data Center needs for operating? Have these resources been checked out to build a Data Center in Grant County? Please consider at least a 2000 ft setback for Data Centers, Transmission Power Lines, Wind Towers, or Solar Panels for Grant County. I am not in favor of any of these being built in Grant County, SD. Please keep South Dakota farmland for farming!

Thank you for your time.

Brenda Sime

## Steve Berkner

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**From:** Karen Loeschke <kloeschke61@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, August 7, 2026 11:29 AM  
**To:** Steve Berkner  
**Subject:** Data Center & Transmission Lines

### EXTERNAL EMAIL

Hi Steve.

I am not in favor of the huge transmission lines proposed to be going through our county. There are so many health reasons for the people who have lived there for a long time. For the safety of livestock and humans, the health reasons are big concerns. Don't let a big cooperation come into county and ruin the farmers and public people who pay taxes and have farmed for many years. Please look at all of the concerns when safety is the main consideration. Let farming be farming and NOT an unsafe place where transmission lines come into their path.

Also, the data center issues need to stay out of our county. There is no reason to disrupt our way of living by having data centers with an issue of water, electricity and any unnecessary things in our county. Make it a priority where the Grant County people need a say in this. Big Corporations are not welcomed here in Grant County. This is a true farming community, and the people of Grant County are important enough to protect them from any unsafe issues. Protect the people of Grant County! Keep the farmers and rural people happy and safe in our county where we live.

Thanks,  
Karen Loeschke

## Steve Berkner

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**From:** Molly Loup <mollyloup52@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, August 7, 2026 11:49 AM  
**To:** Steve Berkner  
**Subject:** concerns about the Data Center

### EXTERNAL EMAIL

Mr. Berkner,

There are so many concerns with Data Center coming to Grant County:  
Much noise that the residents don't have a choice but to listen to loud Megahertz.

With Grant County being agricultural, many people in other areas have experienced their calves being born dead.

Other states are experience water being gone. Do we want Big Stone Lake to disappear...what about tourism because of water.

Please consider these things and look into them.

Molly Loup  
Roberts County Resident  
I have family and friends in Grant County.

## Steve Berkner

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**From:** SouthDakotaSentinel <SouthDakotaSentinel@protonmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, August 7, 2026 11:51 AM  
**To:** Steve Berkner  
**Subject:** Data Center Ordinance Objections

### EXTERNAL EMAIL

Good Morning,

South Dakota for Data Center transparency would like to reach out on behalf of members all over the state (including over 70 within your community) and voice our concerns we have about your data center ordinances.

#### **Here are our concerns with how your residents were notified**

Firstly, your notice was vague and it confused residents. It did not mention the subject matter of the ordinance being changed and only the ordinance number. Many of your residents have called us from LANDLINE telephones, it's not reasonable to expect residents to go and research the ordinance especially if they don't know what it's concerning.

As a commission, it would build trust within your community to make an effort to include residents in impactful decisions with community town halls and input sessions as well as make an effort to notify residents as transparently as possible.

#### **Now for our concerns about the ordinances themselves.**

Every water protection switches off below 10 MW

They apply only to a facility "exceeding ten (10) megawatts of IT load." At or under that, none of them apply.

The water limit is a ratio, not a cap

It sets a "maximum annual Water Usage Effectiveness (WUE) of 0.05 gallons per kWh" with no limit on total gallons. A larger facility uses more electricity, so it can lawfully draw more water and still comply.

It is an annual average

A hot, dry August can run well above the limit and still average out compliant across twelve months — the months the aquifer is under the most stress are the ones the annual figure hides.

The quarter-mile from your house may not apply

Equipment must sit “fifty feet from the property boundary... and/or one-quarter mile (1,320 feet) from any church, school, or residence.” As written, fifty feet alone can satisfy it.

The overnight noise limit permits bursts to 60 dBA

45 dBA between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m., but with “5 dBA for a total of 15 minutes in any one-hour period; or 10 dBA for a total of 5 minutes in any one-hour period; or 15 dBA for a total of 1.5 minutes” allowed on top.

Paying for infrastructure damage is optional

“Approval of a data center may be conditioned upon” financial assurance for water-supply impacts. May, not shall.

One requirement has no number in it

§1220.08(4)(e)(ii) requires storage “for a minimum of [24–72] hours at peak load.” The brackets are still in the draft going to hearing.

The powerline and the ordinance are moving through this county at the same time

Grant County has been taking 765 kV presentations since 6 January 2026, when Xcel and Otter Tail presented to the Commission; powerline setbacks went to Planning & Zoning on 13 April. The ordinance itself requires an applicant to produce written verification from the electric utility of capacity on its supply lines and substations — capacity that does not exist today. We are told these are separate projects. They are arriving in the same county in the same year, and residents have had no say in either.

We have concerns that your ordinances will not have enough protections for water, radiation, light, noise, and air pollution, there are no financial protections for residents.

Please consider strengthening your ordinances - we would be happy to help!

- The SDDCT Team

Sent from [Proton Mail](#) for iOS.

## Steve Berkner

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**From:** Tina Balling <tinab@bpimn.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, August 7, 2026 11:53 AM  
**To:** Steve Berkner  
**Subject:** upcoming ordinance update  
  
**Importance:** High

### EXTERNAL EMAIL

Steve-

I seriously hope the Grant County commissioners write the ordinance concerning possible data centers in the county in such a way as to prohibit them 100%. They are a drain on electricity and water. They are air, sound and environmental pollutants. The bad seriously out weighs any good that could possibly come from them. There is just too much unknown and too much uncertainty.

Sincerely,

Tina Balling

Grant County resident

## Steve Berkner

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**From:** Tina Balling <tinab@bpimn.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, August 7, 2026 11:59 AM  
**To:** Steve Berkner  
**Subject:** water shortage

### EXTERNAL EMAIL

What about years such as this one where the water is low? This is very concerning.  
Tina Balling

## Steve Berkner

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**From:** Joeline Hicks <moviemomsix@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, August 7, 2026 12:04 PM  
**To:** Steve Berkner  
**Subject:** Power lines

### EXTERNAL EMAIL

We are very concerned about the possibility of the prospective high voltage power lines in our county.  
They are not safe  
They seem to be a magnet for data centers  
Most residents do not want them  
They are counterproductive to our agricultural area.  
The parameters suggested sound good in theory, but it is too easy to grant waivers to such things when their foot is in the door. We have seen this happen with other things approved by the board.  
Sincerely  
Rob and Joeline Hicks  
Kilborn Township