

COG - Series of Forums on Data Centers in DMV

Overview:

COG is hosting a series of workshops in the first quarter of 2026. These workshops are designed to assist local governments with the core knowledge needed to effectively communicate and work with the data center and AI sectors. The sessions will also explore opportunities to develop policy interventions associated with managing the growth of data centers in local communities.

Objectives:

- Share information on key issues related to AI and data centers.
- Foster ability to effectively communicate, collaborate and share knowledge among local governments, industry experts, and stakeholders.
- Develop actionable strategies and policy interventions for optimizing data center planning, construction, operations, and supporting infrastructure and community benefits.

Audience:

Elected Officials, Agency Leadership and Staff, Industry (Data Center and Utilities – Energy and Water), Economic Development Agencies, Non-Governmental Subject Matter Entities.

Potential Forum Schedule / Locations:

- Energy Focused – February 25, 2026 (VA)
- Water Focused – March 2, 2026 (DC)
- Siting/Land use Focused – March 2026 TBD (MD)

Forum Format:

- Welcome and Closing Guest – Elected / Appointed Senior Leadership
- Luncheon Guest Speakers
- Informational Sessions Followed by Facilitated Roundtable – Facilitator is a person known/recognized in the field from the jurisdiction hosting the forum

FORUM 1: Data Centers Development and Energy Challenges and Opportunities

Date: February 25, 2026

Location: ICF Conference Center, Reston, VA
10:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Welcome

10:00 AM – 10:20 AM

Chair Phyllis Randall, Loudoun County Board of Supervisors
Anne Choate, President, ICF

Session 1

Data Center Primer

10:20 AM – 11:00 AM

Explore the significance of data centers, particularly in the IT, cyber, and AI sectors, and their impact on local and regional economies. Understand the main types of data centers their specific needs. Learn about the number of operational data centers, projected growth in the next two years, and the corresponding increase in energy demand.

1. The Data-Driven Economy: Economic Contributions of Data Centers
2. Overview of Types of Data Centers and their Operations: Most likely to target our region.
3. Who are the Players that Influence this? Understand the Challenges and What is on the Horizon? Where do local governments sit?

Q & A

10:45 AM – 11:00 AM

Jim Clinger, ICF (Moderator)
Nicole Riley, Data Center Coalition (Invited)
Shankar Chandramowli, ICF
Bill Eger, Ethos Consulting

Session 2

Looking to the Future

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Assess data center growth and energy requirements, current grid capacity and utility plans for rising demand, technology and efficiency developments, advances in microgrid controllers, and alternative or supplemental energy sources.

1. Understanding the Scale of Energy and Infrastructure Needs: On ground and those in the pipeline
2. The Electric Grid – How they are meeting current needs; its impact on rates / other consumers; Planning and developing energy and supply infrastructure to support data centers. Flexible Load Options, Microgrid Controllers.
3. Alternative / Supplemental Energy sources: Role of Energy Efficiency and Technology Advancement. Bring Your Own Energy - What can be done (High Voltage DC, Microgrids, Small Modular Reactors). Who is doing it, what does it look like? What else is needed?

Q & A

11:45 AM – 12:00 PM

Jim Reilly, Reilly Associates (Moderator)

Jason Williams, Strategic Partnerships, Dominion Energy

Will Ellis, Government Affairs, Pepco

David Rardin, PJM

Tina Kaarsberg, U.S. Department of Energy

LUNCH

Guest Speaker: State Policy Landscape

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

Deb Harris, Vice President, ICF

David Terry, Director, National Association of State Energy Offices (NASEO)

Angela Navarro, President, Align Energy Advisors

Session 3

Energy Policy Updates, Processes, and Opportunities

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Explore what energy efficiency and sustainable options are available to assist in meeting the energy need. Discuss what role data centers can play to augment energy supply. Discuss what policy options are available and effective to support efforts to meet energy needs.

1. On-Site: Generation and Efficiency Solutions; Backup Power; Demand Response; Microgrid Controllers.
2. Offsite: Interconnection and Bring Your Own Energy

Mike Turner, Vice Chair, Loudoun County Board of Supervisors (Moderator)

Jeff Dennis, Electricity Consumers Alliance

Neal Elliot, American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy

Joel Yu, Enchanted Rock

Emily Orvis, Voltus

Closing Remarks

2:00 PM