



MEMORANDUM

To: Planning And Zoning Commissioners

From: Adam B. Bailey, AICP, Director of Planning and Development Services

Date: June 17, 2026

Subject: **ZTA 2026-01 — Data Centers Text Amendment**

This memo is intended to help the Planning and Zoning Commission prepare for the public hearing on Zoning Text Amendment 2026-01 (Data Centers), scheduled for Monday, June 22, 2026.

THE BIG PICTURE

ZTA 2026-01 creates Mesquite's first dedicated regulatory framework for data centers, paired with a companion framework for Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS). Today, a data center proposed in Mesquite would be reviewed as a generic industrial or warehouse use, with no standards addressing noise, generator testing, cooling water systems, residential setbacks, or decommissioning. This amendment closes that gap. It is a text amendment only — no specific property is being rezoned and no individual project is being approved at this hearing.

WHAT'S CHANGING (7 sections)

The amendment touches seven sections of the Mesquite Zoning Ordinance. A new Section 1.408 establishes citywide glare and lighting standards requiring full-cutoff fixtures and zero light spillover at property lines. Sections 1A.200 and 1A.201 are amended to cross-reference new screening requirements. Section 3.203 adds data centers and BESS to the Schedule of Permitted Uses. Sections 3.300, 3.400, and 3.405 are amended to add development and parking standards, including a new Parking Standard 29 for data centers. Section 3.500 gains two new sections: 3.514 for data centers and 3.515 for BESS, which together form the core of the new regulatory framework. Section 6.102 adds definitions for Data Center, BESS, Cryptocurrency Mining, and Generator Yard. A related amendment to City Code Section 10-75 establishes enforceable noise limits, but that piece is a City Council action; for the Commission, it is informational only.

KEY POLICY CALLS TO KNOW

- Data centers permitted only by CUP in the I district — Council reviews each one case-by-case
- 5-acre minimum lot
- Closed-loop cooling required
- Cryptocurrency mining banned outright — all districts, can't be paired with a data center use
- Generator testing limits, fire/life safety tied to NFPA 855 & 72
- Decommissioning obligations required for end-of-life sites

- BESS gets tiered treatment (small-scale, large-scale, portable) with its own permitting, noise, and decommissioning rules
- Modeled on San Angelo's May 2026 ordinance, adapted to Mesquite

THE VOTE

At the June 22 Planning and Zoning Commission meeting, the Commission will be asked to make a recommendation to City Council, which will take final action on July 6. State law and Section 5-308.M of the Zoning Ordinance require the Commission to weigh the amendment's effect on public health, safety, and welfare; its consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and existing land use policy; whether it creates nonconforming uses; and whether it reflects sound policy. Staff's conclusion is that the amendment satisfies all applicable standards and recommends approval.

QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD EXPECT — AND HOW STAFF WOULD ANSWER

- "Why CUP instead of by-right?" → Lets Council evaluate site-specific impacts (noise, traffic, neighbors) on every individual proposal rather than locking in one-size-fits-all rules.
- "What protects neighborhoods near the Industrial district?" → Setback and screening standards in §3.514, the new glare standard (§1.408), and a standalone noise limit in City Code §10-75 that overrides the general noise table for this use.
- "Will this create any nonconforming uses?" → No. No data centers currently exist in Mesquite, so the new standards are purely prospective and don't affect any existing use.
- "Why model this on San Angelo?" → It's the most relevant recent Texas peer ordinance — adapted, not copied wholesale, to fit Mesquite's zoning structure.
- "Why is the City Code §10-75 noise piece informational only for us?" → That's a City Code (not zoning) amendment — it falls under Council's authority alone. P&Z gets visibility into it because it's tied to §3.514 and §3.515.

Staff will be available at the June 22 meeting to address any additional questions and to walk through the proposed ordinance language in detail. Please don't hesitate to reach out before the hearing with any questions or concerns.



Adam B. Bailey, AICP

Director of Planning and Development Services

CC: Garrett Langford, AICP, Assistant Director of Planning and Development Services
Raymond M. Rivas, III, Deputy City Manager