

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 06-26

ESTABLISHING A DATA CENTER TASK FORCE TO ASSESS THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF DATA CENTERS ON PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT AND TO RECOMMEND REGULATORY GUIDELINES

WHEREAS, the country has witnessed a rapid increase in the development of data centers that support cloud computing services, data storage, and newly emergent technologies; and

WHEREAS, residents have expressed grave concern that data centers may cause harm to local communities, including negative environmental and health impacts tied, among other things, to noise, heat, and air pollution; and

WHEREAS, nationally energy prices have increased and, in some places, residents have faced increased costs and strain on their energy grids caused by new data centers; and

WHEREAS, some people have expressed concern that data centers consume disproportionately large amounts of water and may have other negative impacts on local water systems; and

WHEREAS, hyperscale data centers may place unique demands on local infrastructure and give rise to negative externalities that significantly impact local communities and the environment; and

WHEREAS, data centers vary in their size, function, operational needs, and impacts, ranging from edge data centers that are small (typically a few thousand sq. ft.) and located close to end users, to enterprise data centers (typically 30,000 sq. ft. or less) that manage data for a single institution or client, to colocation data centers (typically 30,000 sq. ft. to 100,000 sq. ft.) that manage data for multiple institutions or clients, to hyperscale data centers (typically over 100,000 sq. ft.) that serve large technology companies; and

WHEREAS, according to the International Energy Agency, globally, data center electricity consumption and greenhouse gas emissions are projected to more than double by 2030, rivaling the total annual power consumption of Japan. A typical

AI-focused data center consumes as much electricity as 100,000 households, but some in construction today will consume twenty times that much. This increased demand for power and the addition of greenhouse gas emissions will make it harder to meet climate mitigation goals; and

WHEREAS, there are existing data centers in the City of Philadelphia, none of which are classified as hyperscale data centers; and

WHEREAS, the City must be prepared for potential zoning and permit applications to develop larger data centers with more intensive use, and better prepare to address evolving technology; and

WHEREAS, on August 18, 2026, Governor Josh Shapiro signed Executive Order 2026-05 directing all Commonwealth agencies to require all data center proposals applying for permits with the Commonwealth to comply with the Governor's Responsible Infrastructure Development (GRID) Requirements, in order to block speculative, irresponsible data center projects from moving forward, ensure that local governments have a pivotal role in approving land used for data center development, and protect Pennsylvania residents; and

WHEREAS, on September 14, 2026, The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission released an independent analysis warning that rapidly growing electricity demand, driven largely by data center development, could create serious reliability risks across Pennsylvania and the broader region unless electricity supply keeps pace with that growth; and

WHEREAS, the City of Philadelphia has a duty to ensure any application for any proposed development or issued permit has guardrails in place to keep our residents safe from any unintended consequence; and

WHEREAS, the Data Center Task Force created by this Executive Order is intended to bring together subject matter experts and community stakeholders to help shape the City's approach to data centers and ensure that data centers in Philadelphia are developed and operated in a safe, responsible manner that is aligned with the long-term interests of the City and its residents;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, CHERELLE L. PARKER, Mayor of the City of Philadelphia, by the powers vested in me by the Philadelphia Home Rule Charter, do hereby order as follows:

SECTION 1. Establishing the Data Center Task Force.

The Data Center Task Force (hereinafter “the Task Force”) is hereby established to lead the City’s efforts to gather information, engage relevant stakeholders, and formulate recommendations related to the safe and responsible development and operation of new and existing data centers in Philadelphia.

SECTION 2. Composition of the Task Force.

1. The Task Force shall include representatives from the following:

- a) The Office of Clean and Green;
- b) The Office of Sustainability;
- c) The Department of Planning and Development;
- d) The Commerce Department;
- e) The Water Department;
- f) The Office of Information Technology;
- g) The Department of Public Health;
- h) The Department of Licenses and Inspections, Inspections, Safety, and Compliance Division;
- i) The Office of the Council President; and
- j) Any additional City department or agency, as determined by the Mayor.

2. The Task Force shall be co-led by representatives from the Office of Sustainability and the Office of Clean and Green.

SECTION 3. Task Force Functions.

1. The Task Force shall:

- a) Undertake research to understand the potential benefits and harms of data centers for the residents of Philadelphia, with particular attention to the impact on our neighborhoods and residents, local utilities, infrastructure, greenhouse gas emissions, workforce opportunities, and the local economy;
- b) Explore best practices for fostering responsible development of data centers, with a focus on minimizing negative externalities and protecting public health and safety interests;
- c) Engage relevant subject matter experts and stakeholders to gather information, including from:
 - i. Neighborhood and community groups;
 - ii. Building trades;
 - iii. Utility companies;
 - iv. Workforce/economic development organizations;
 - v. Research and advocacy organizations;
 - vi. Environmental organizations;
 - vii. Housing and development organizations;
 - viii. Data center users and developers;
 - ix. Local universities; and
 - x. Any additional external stakeholders as determined by the Task Force.

- d) Recommend changes to City laws, regulations, and policies that may be appropriate with respect to the development and operation of data centers in Philadelphia, including recommendations specific to data centers of different sizes or types; and
 - e) Create a transparent process that provides information to the public and allows for public input.
2. By no later than June 30, 2027, the Task Force shall conclude the process of gathering data and stakeholder input, as set forth above, and produce a final report. The final report, which shall include input from the Law Department, shall be presented to the Mayor and City Council and published on the City's website. The report shall include, among other things, findings and recommendations about the following:
- a) Design and planning considerations including recommendations related to the location, building placement, size restrictions, and screening or buffering of data centers that may mitigate their impact on surrounding communities;
 - b) The environmental impacts of data centers including, but not limited to, air, heat, and noise pollution, water system impacts, energy usage, and e-waste;
 - c) Safety considerations related to the building and operation of data centers and impacts on the City's Emergency Response Plan;
 - d) Fiscal impacts, including those to our local broadband infrastructure and utilities, Philadelphia's workforce, tax revenue, property assessments and City budget;
 - e) Issues related to the decommissioning of data centers and the disposal of materials, if data center operations should cease; and
 - f) Policy, legislative, and regulatory actions the City might take to mitigate any potential health, safety, economic, and environmental impacts to Philadelphia residents.

SECTION 5. Intergovernmental Cooperation.

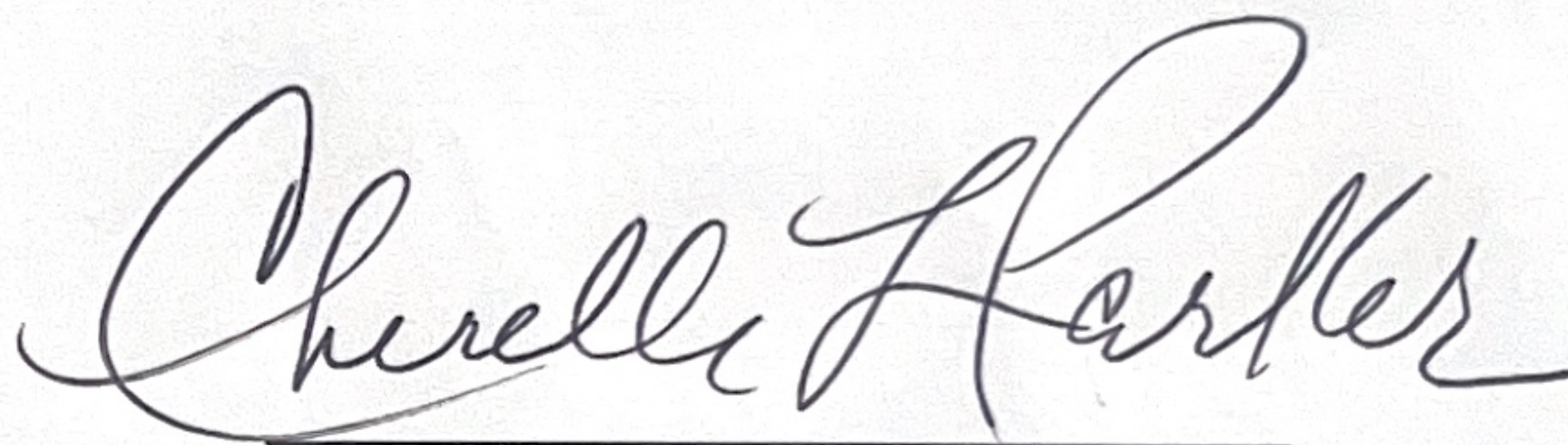
1. Consistent with Section 8-401 of The Philadelphia Home Rule Charter, every City department and agency shall take all appropriate action to assist the Task Force in executing its duties, as set forth by this Order.
2. The Task Force shall take steps to cooperate with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, and the Delaware River Basin Commission to implement the standards from the Governor's Responsible Infrastructure Development (GRID) within Philadelphia and offer further recommendations for action that may be needed for the City.

SECTION 4. Effective Date.

This Order shall take effect immediately.

9-16-26

Date

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Cherelle L. Parker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Cherelle L. Parker, Mayor