



Behind the Cloud

Planning for Data Centers

Sponsored by APA Chapters & Divisions

Q&A

Type content questions in at any time.

Be sure to include which speaker you'd like to answer the question!



TODAY'S GUEST HOST



UPCOMING WEBCASTS 1:00 – 2:30 PM ET

01
MAY

ADA Compliance for Local Governments

May 1, 2026 | 1:00 - 2:30 PM ET

07
MAY

Reimagining the Industrial Past: Context-Sensitive Design in the 2026 APA Student Competition

May 7, 2026 | 1:00 - 2:30 PM ET *Thursday*



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LET'S BE FRIENDS



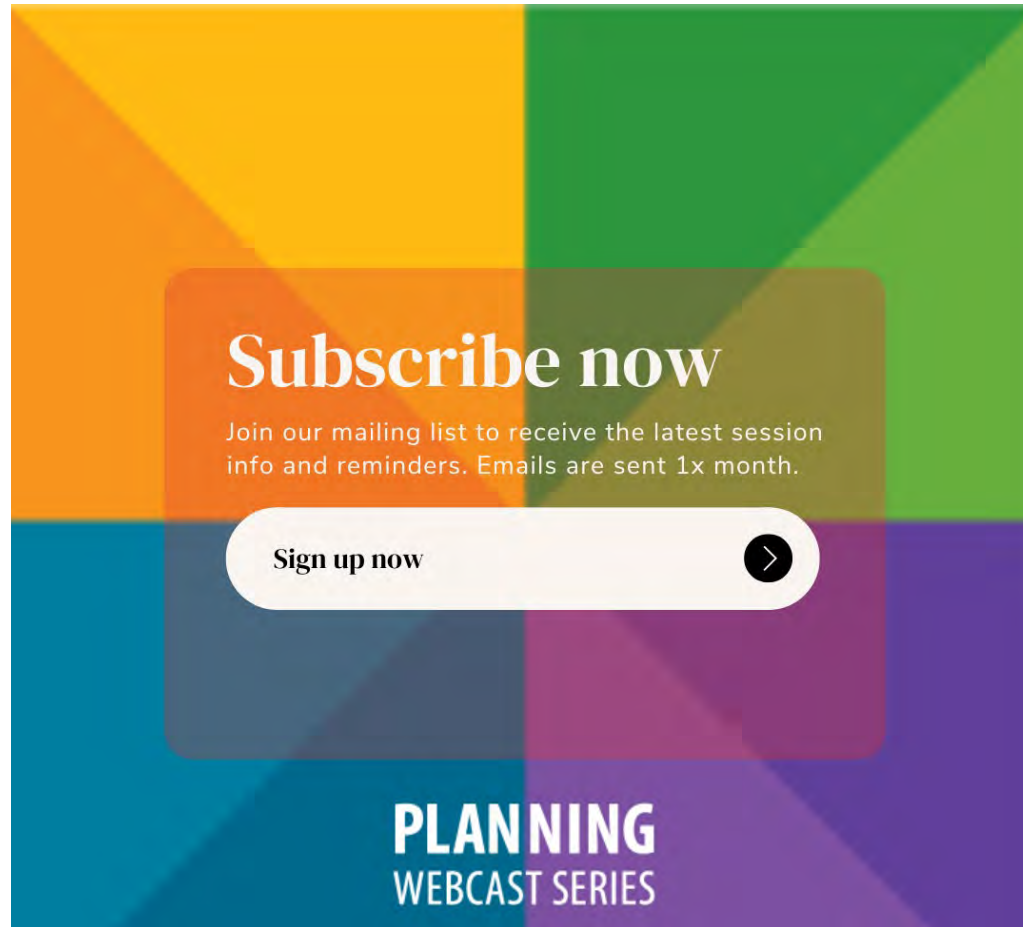
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PLANNING WEBCAST SERIES

Planning and Data Center Growth

Land, Infrastructure, and Policy in the United States

Justin Kollar, AICP

Assistant Professor of Planning and Urban Design,
National University of Singapore
PhD, MIT (2025)

APA Webinar
April 2026



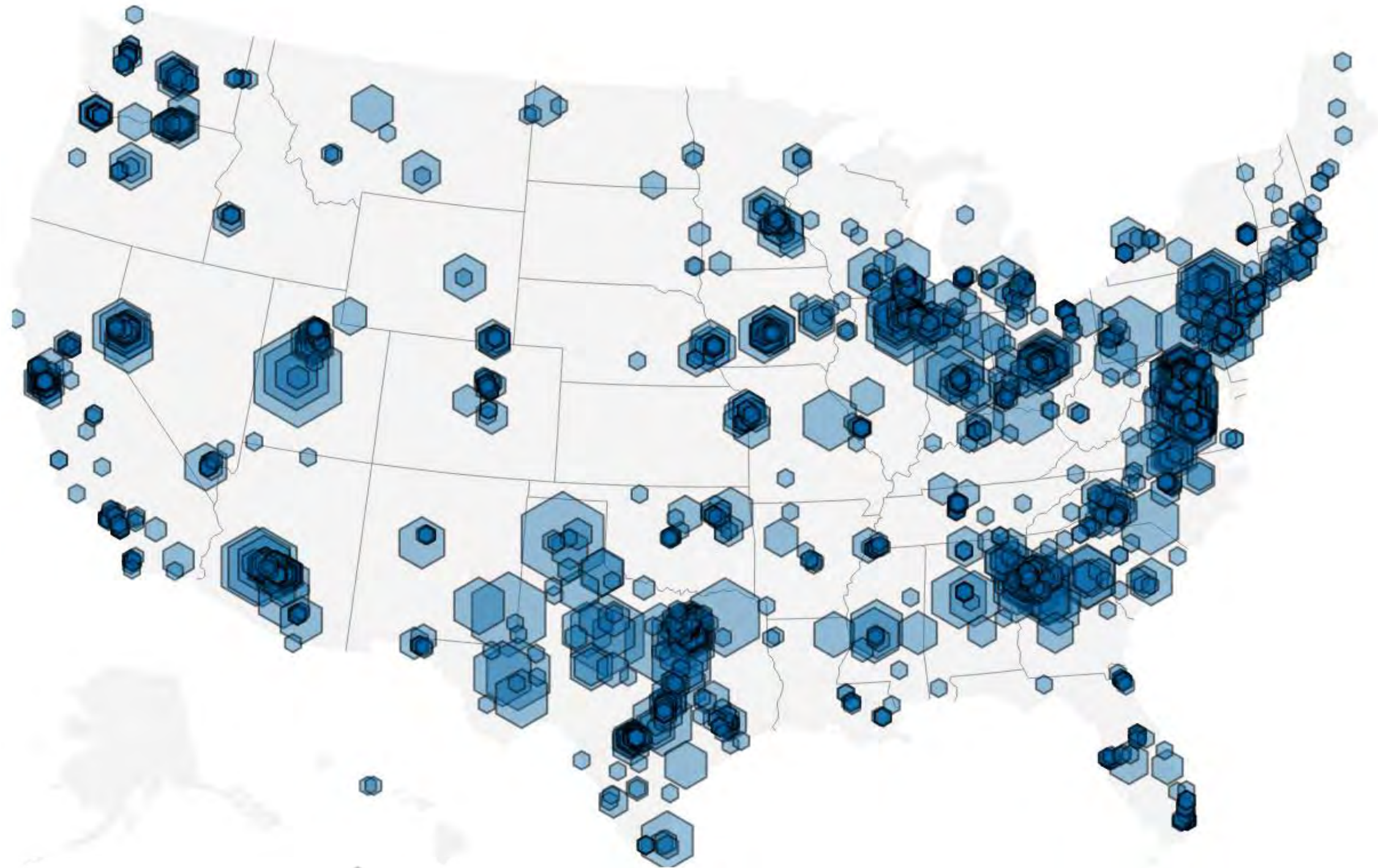
Tech Leaders Pledge Up to \$500 Billion in AI Investment in U.S.
THE WALL STREET JOURNAL


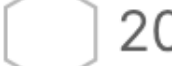

Who Will Fund AI's \$3 Trillion Ask?
Morgan Stanley



U.S. President Donald Trump speaks on AI infrastructure with Larry Ellison, Masayoshi Son, and Sam Altman at the White House, January 21, 2025.

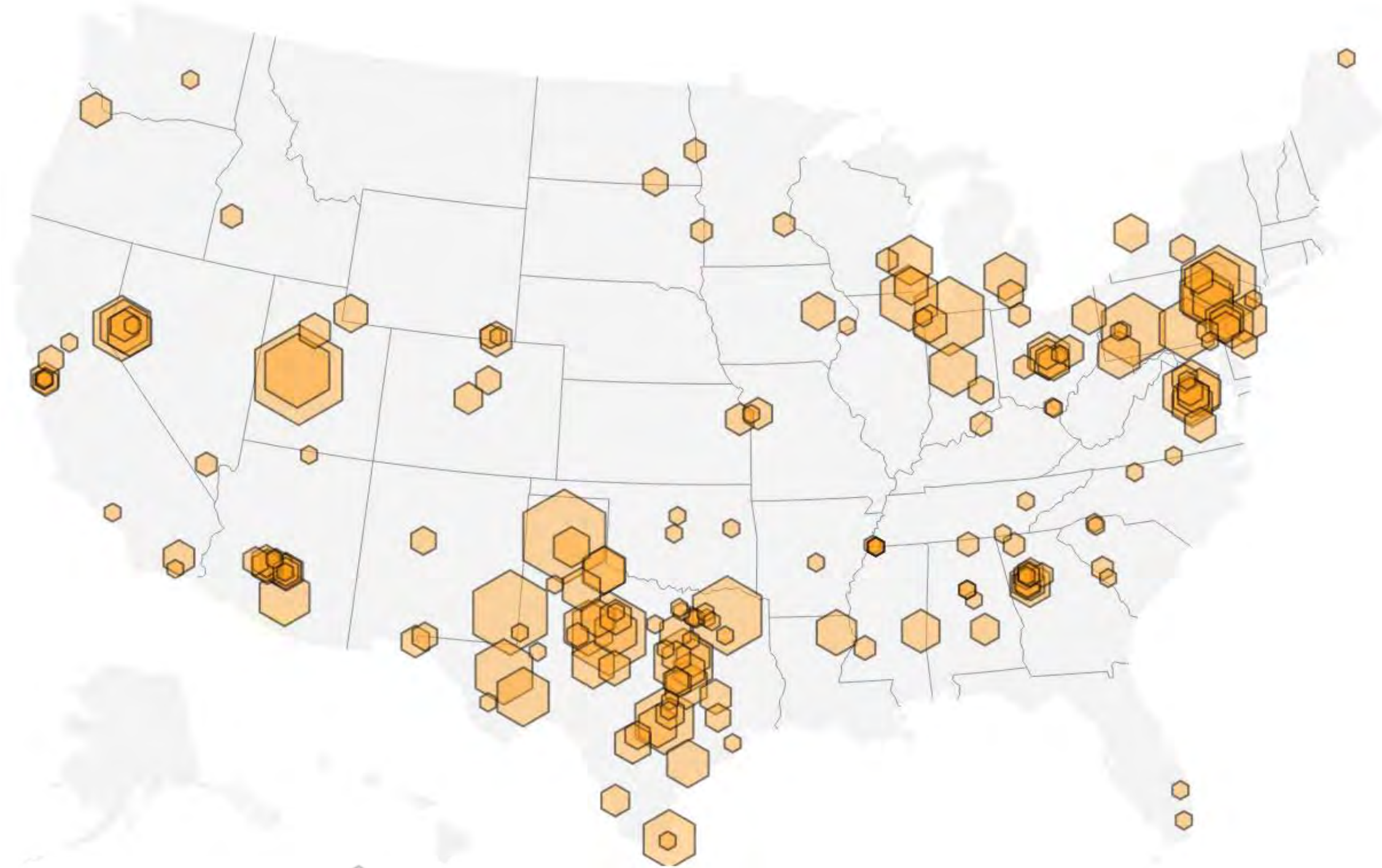
Existing and Planned Data Centers as of September 2025


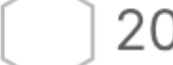



No. of data centers  5  20  50

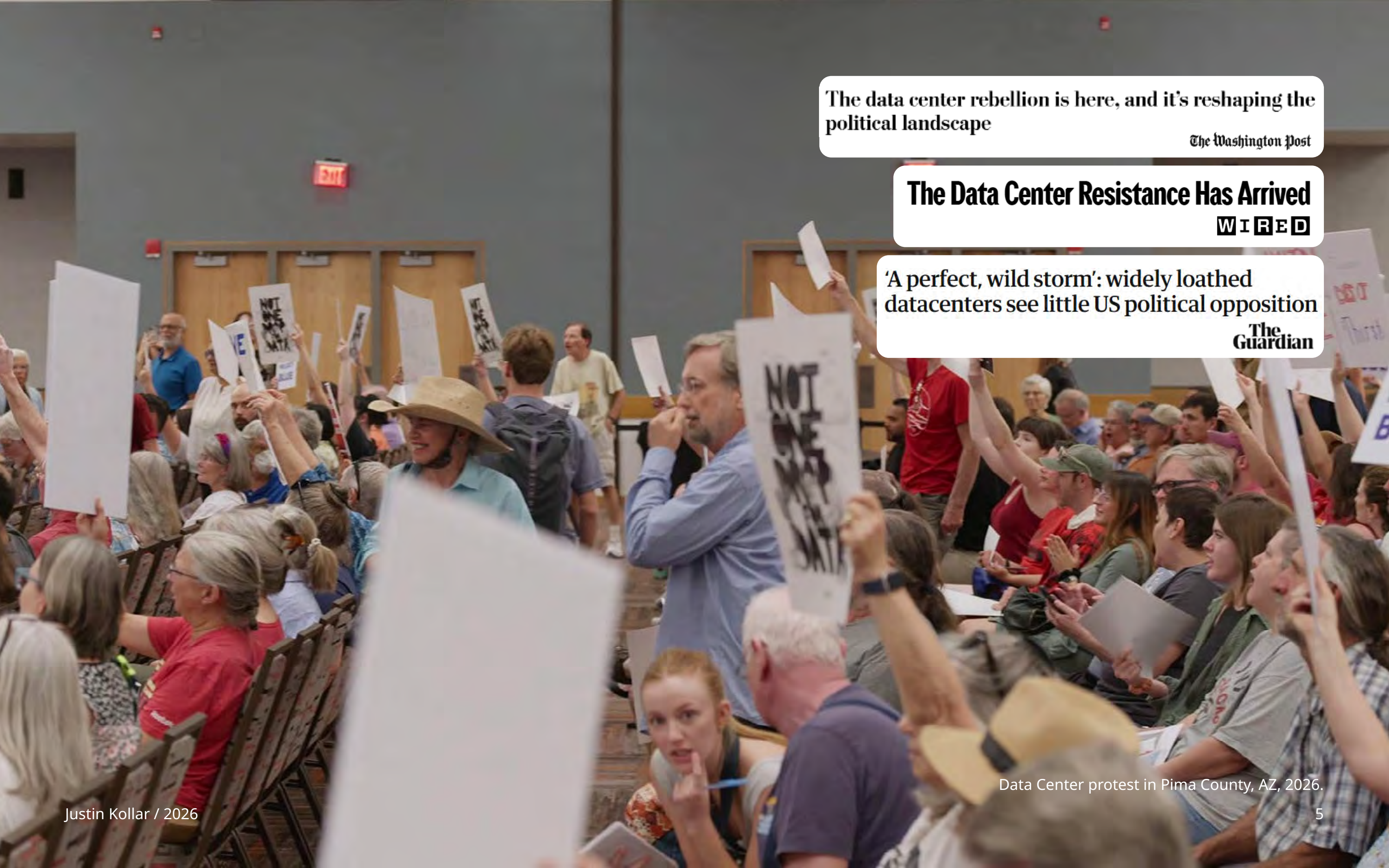
Muro, M., & Methkupally, S. (2026, February 5). Turning the data center boom into long-term, local prosperity. Brookings.

Existing and Planned AI Data Centers as of September 2025



No. of data centers  5  20  50

Muro, M., & Methkupally, S. (2026, February 5). Turning the data center boom into long-term, local prosperity. Brookings.



The data center rebellion is here, and it's reshaping the political landscape

The Washington Post

The Data Center Resistance Has Arrived

WIRED

'A perfect, wild storm': widely loathed datacenters see little US political opposition

The Guardian

Contents

(1) What is driving data center growth?

(2) What pressures do data centers place on land, energy, and water?

Metro Portland, Oregon

Metro Phoenix, Arizona

(3) How are policy and regulation changing?

State Policy

Federal Policy

Emerging Directions

(1) What is driving data center growth?

A Geopolitical and Technological Conjunction

Semiconductor Manufacturing
2020-2024



AI Chips and Data Centers
2025-



In a World Awash in Data, Geopolitics Is All About Chips

Bloomberg

Biden Administration Clamps Down on China's Access to Chip Technology

The New York Times

Exclusive: Washington pressures TSMC to make chips in US

NIKKEI Asia

Losing AI race to China is a bigger threat than global warming, Burgum says

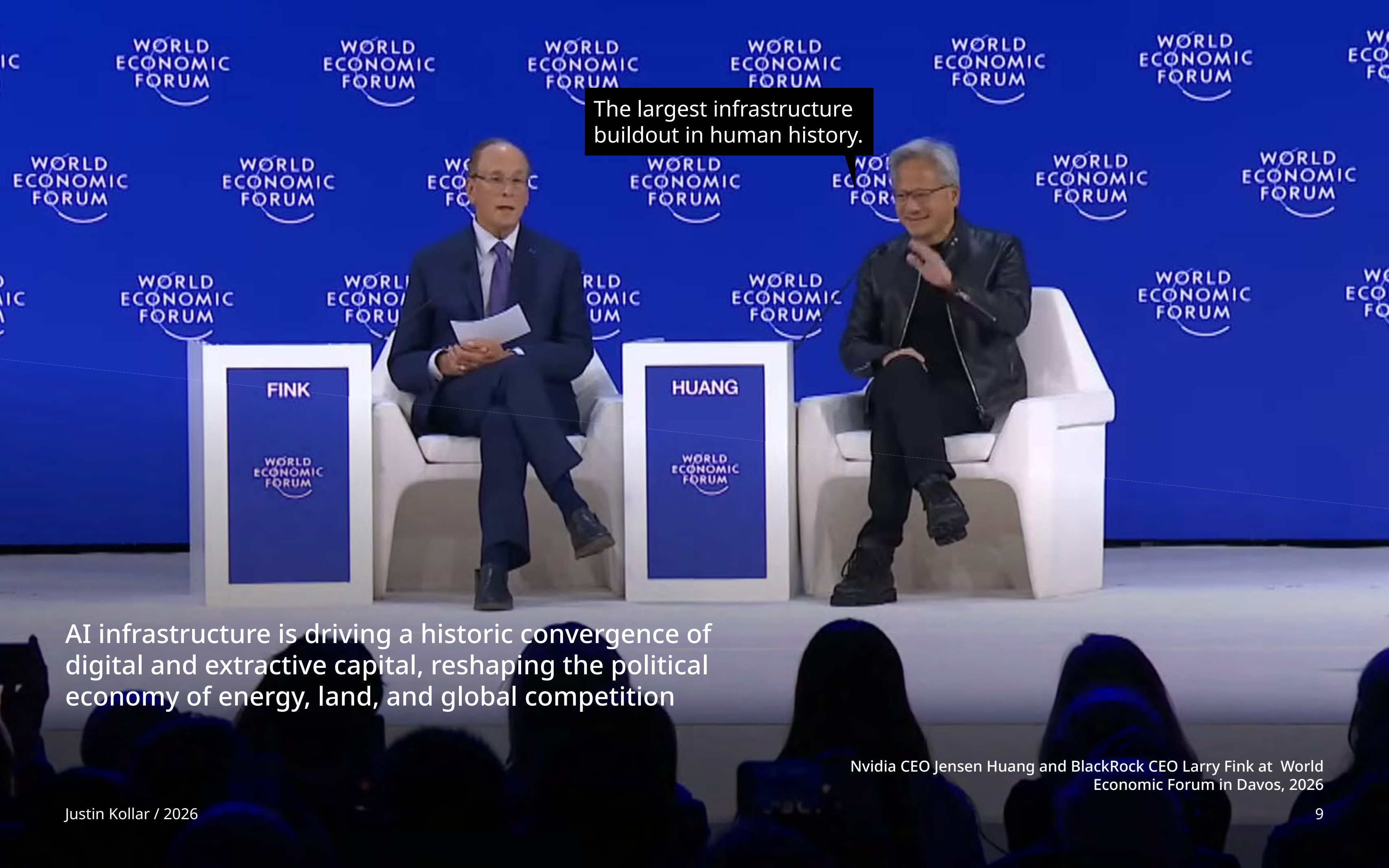
Washington Examiner

The Global Race to Control A.I.

The New York Times

ACCELERATING FEDERAL PERMITTING OF DATA CENTER INFRASTRUCTURE

The WHITE HOUSE

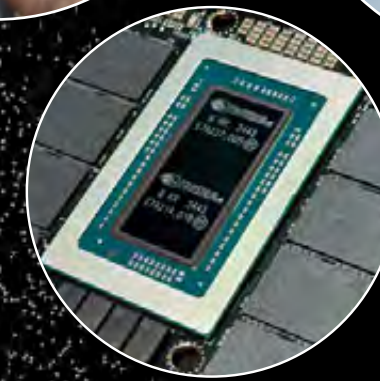


The largest infrastructure buildout in human history.

AI infrastructure is driving a historic convergence of digital and extractive capital, reshaping the political economy of energy, land, and global competition

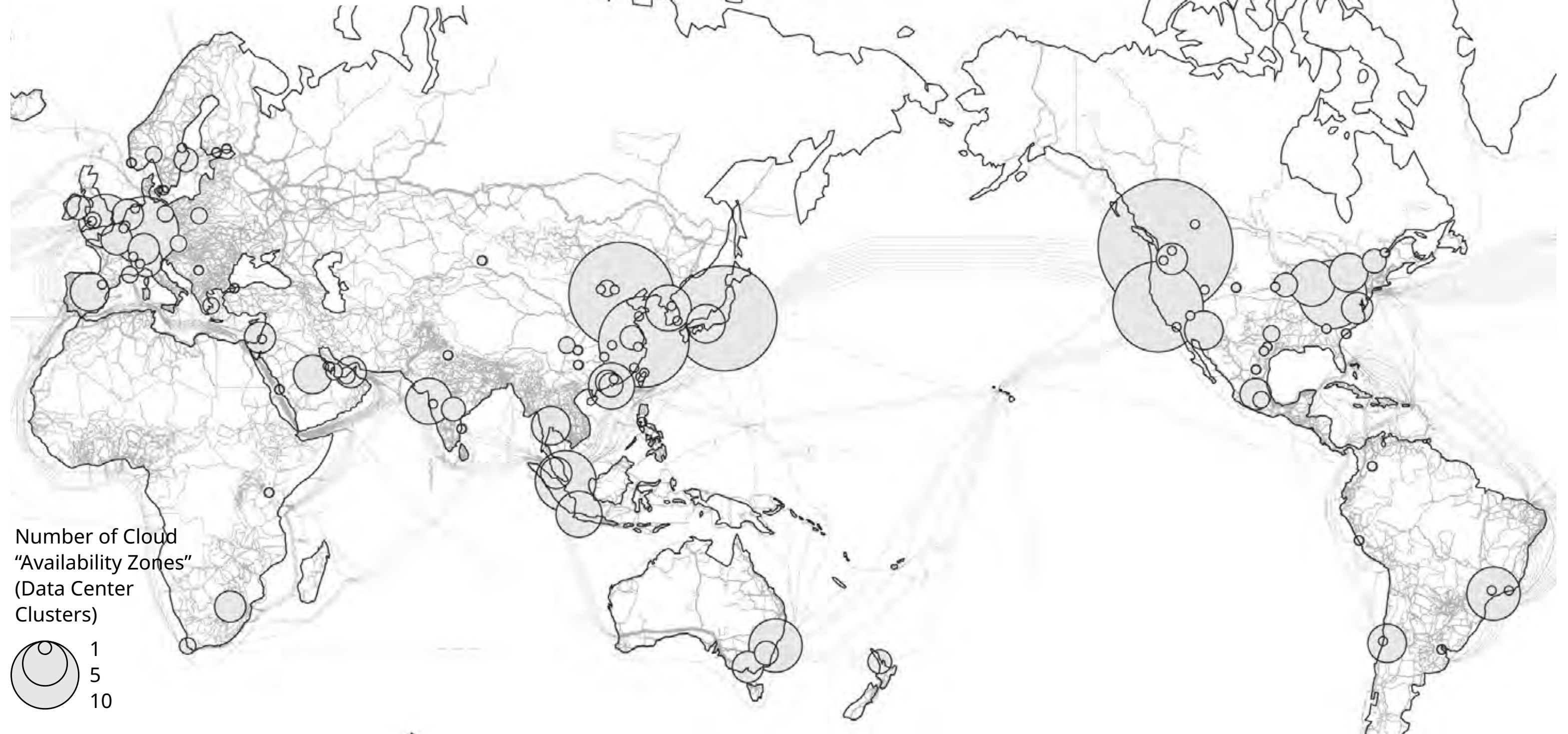
Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang and BlackRock CEO Larry Fink at World Economic Forum in Davos, 2026

Hyper-scalable Networked Infrastructure Regime

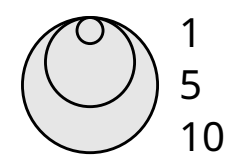


Background Source: Urban Theory Lab, 2013

Geographic Coverage of the Data Center Clusters of the Largest Cloud Companies, 2024



Number of Cloud
"Availability Zones"
(Data Center
Clusters)



From: "Geopolitical Ecologies of Cloud Capitalism." *Environment & Planning A: Economy and Space*, 2025.

Firms included: Amazon, Google, Microsoft, Oracle, IBM, Alibaba, Huawei, and Tencent.
Data sources: Amazon, Google, Microsoft, Oracle, IBM, Alibaba, Huawei, Tencent, International Telecommunications Union



Texans are demanding their local governments push pause on data centers. Can they?

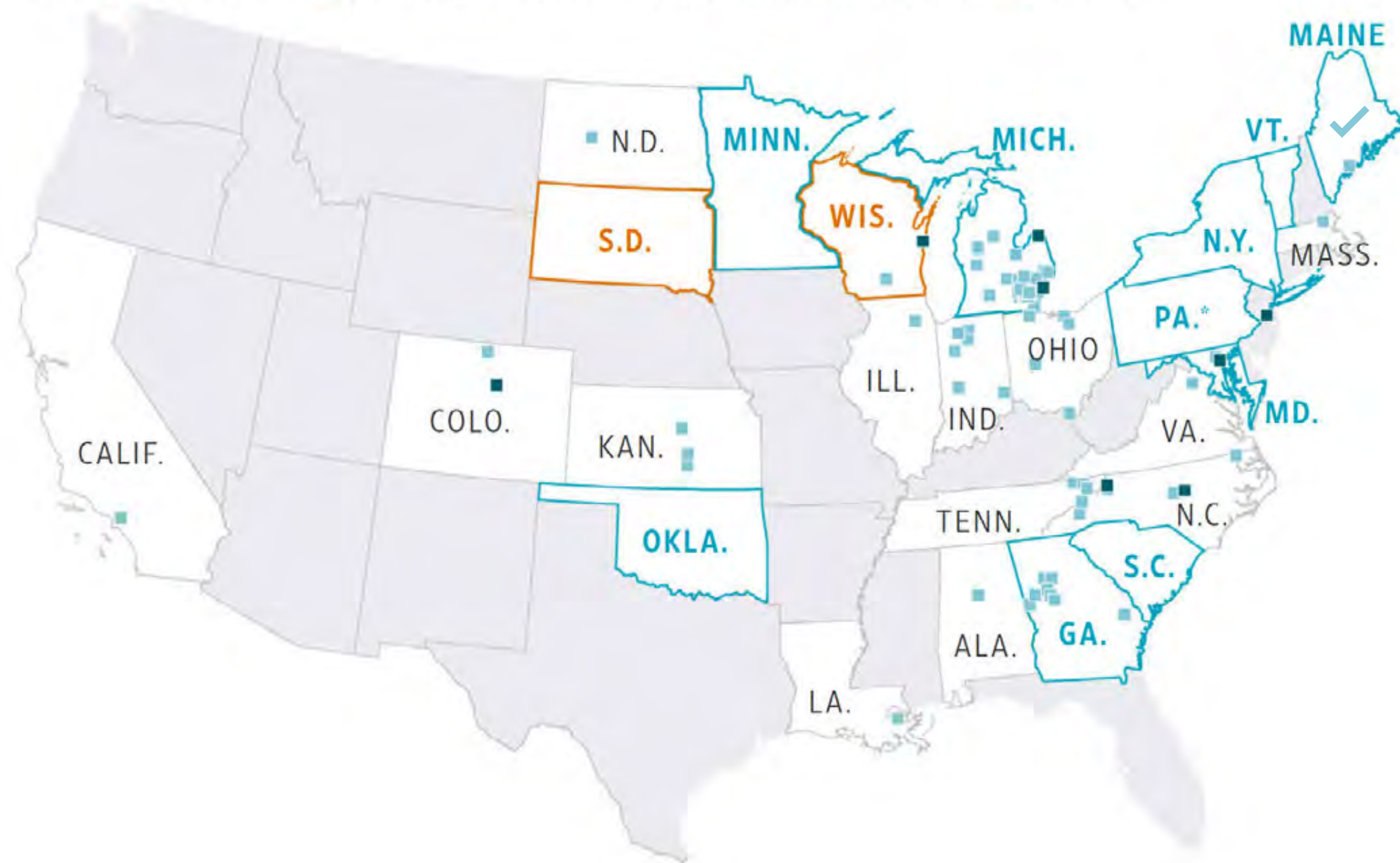
THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

Data center protest in Hays County, TX. Source: AP News.

Growing Push for Moratoria

Status of bans on new data centers

States Proposed Defeated Local governments Proposed Passed

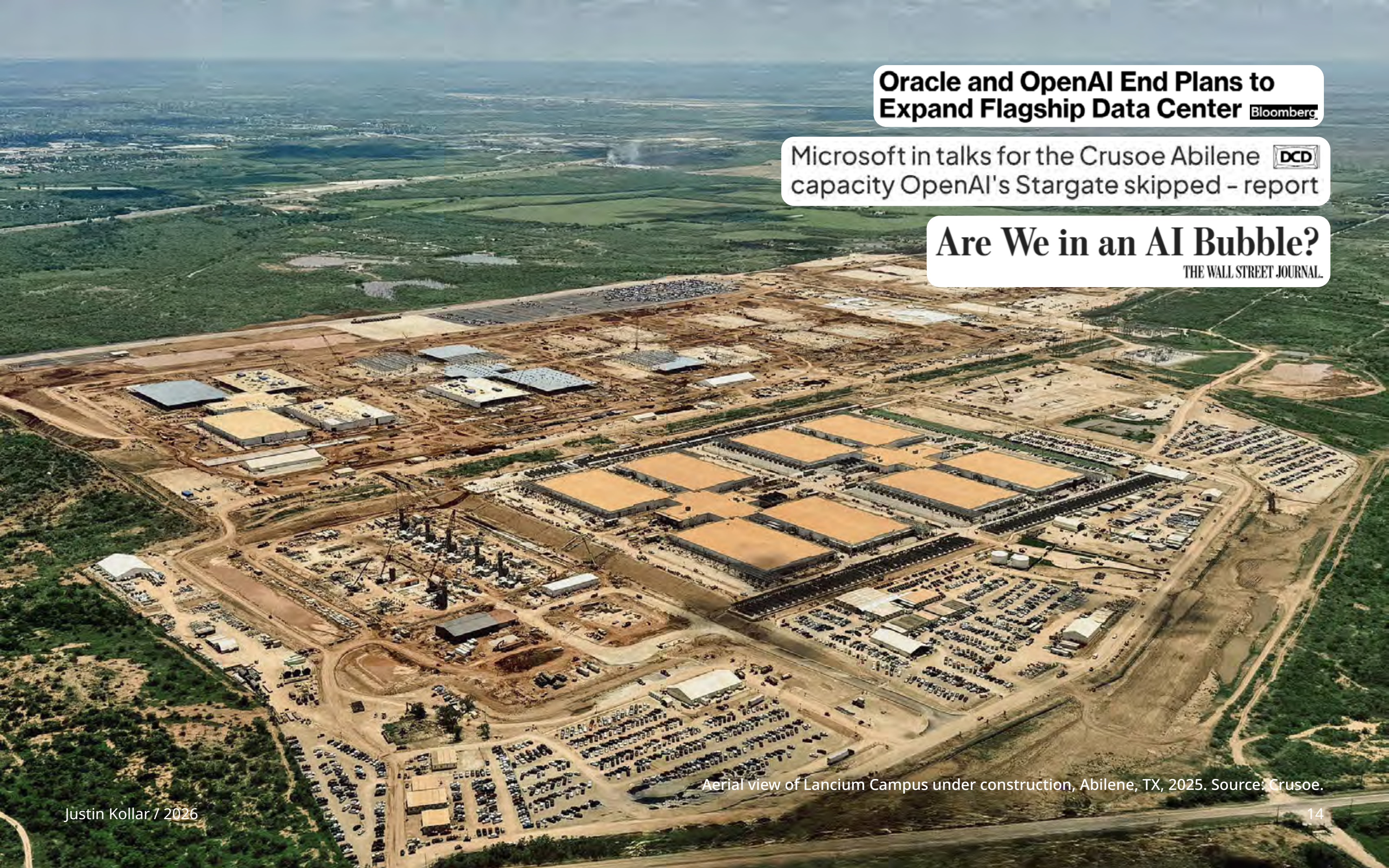


Source: Max Rust and Will Parker. "These Cities and States Are Taking Aim at Data Centers." The Wall Street Journal, April 7, 2026.

Oracle and OpenAI End Plans to Expand Flagship Data Center Bloomberg

Microsoft in talks for the Crusoe Abilene capacity OpenAI's Stargate skipped - report DCD

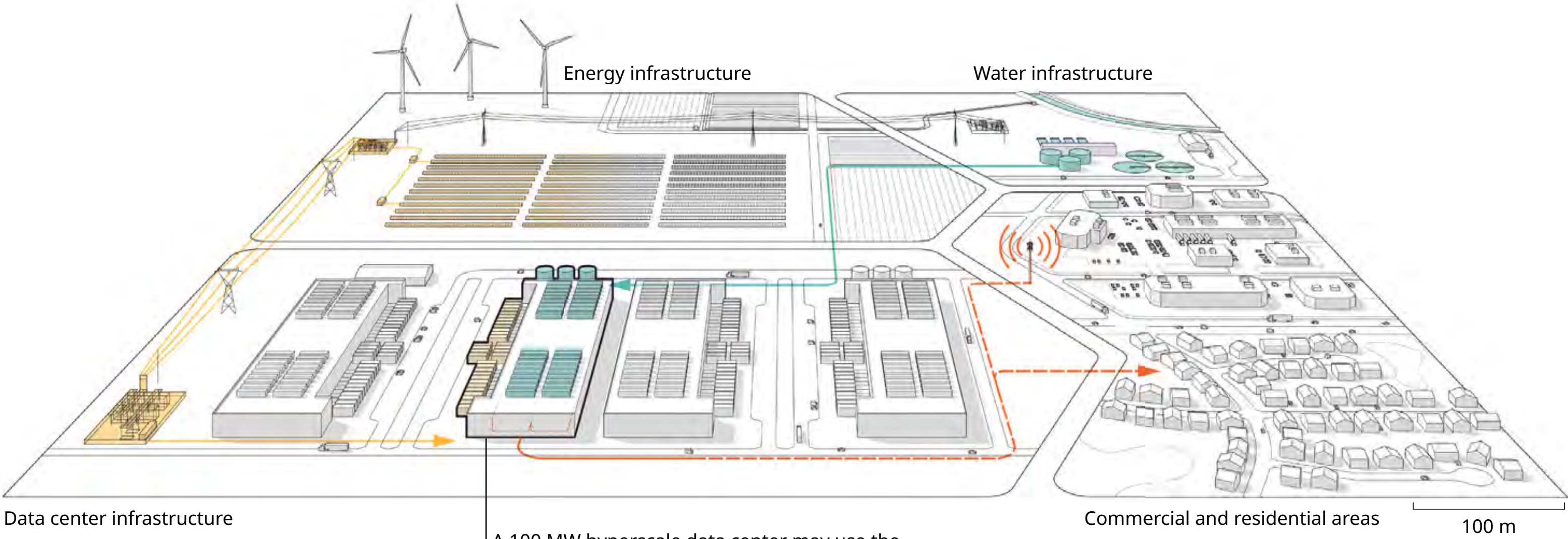
Are We in an AI Bubble?
THE WALL STREET JOURNAL



Aerial view of Lancium Campus under construction, Abilene, TX, 2025. Source: Crusoe.

(2) What pressures do data centers place on land, energy, and water?

Infrastructural Nexus of a Hyperscalable "Data Center"



A 100 MW hyperscale data center may use the energy and water equivalent to a city of 50,000 to 100,000+ households.

Metro Portland, Oregon

OREGON TECH

The Dalles settles public records lawsuit over Google's data centers, will disclose water use to The Oregonian/OregonLive

Updated: Feb. 22, 2023, 9:35 a.m. | Published: Dec. 14, 2022, 5:05 p.m.

OREGON TECH

Google's water use is soaring in The Dalles, records show, with two more data centers to come

Updated: Feb. 22, 2023, 10:17 a.m. | Published: Dec. 17, 2022, 7:04 a.m.

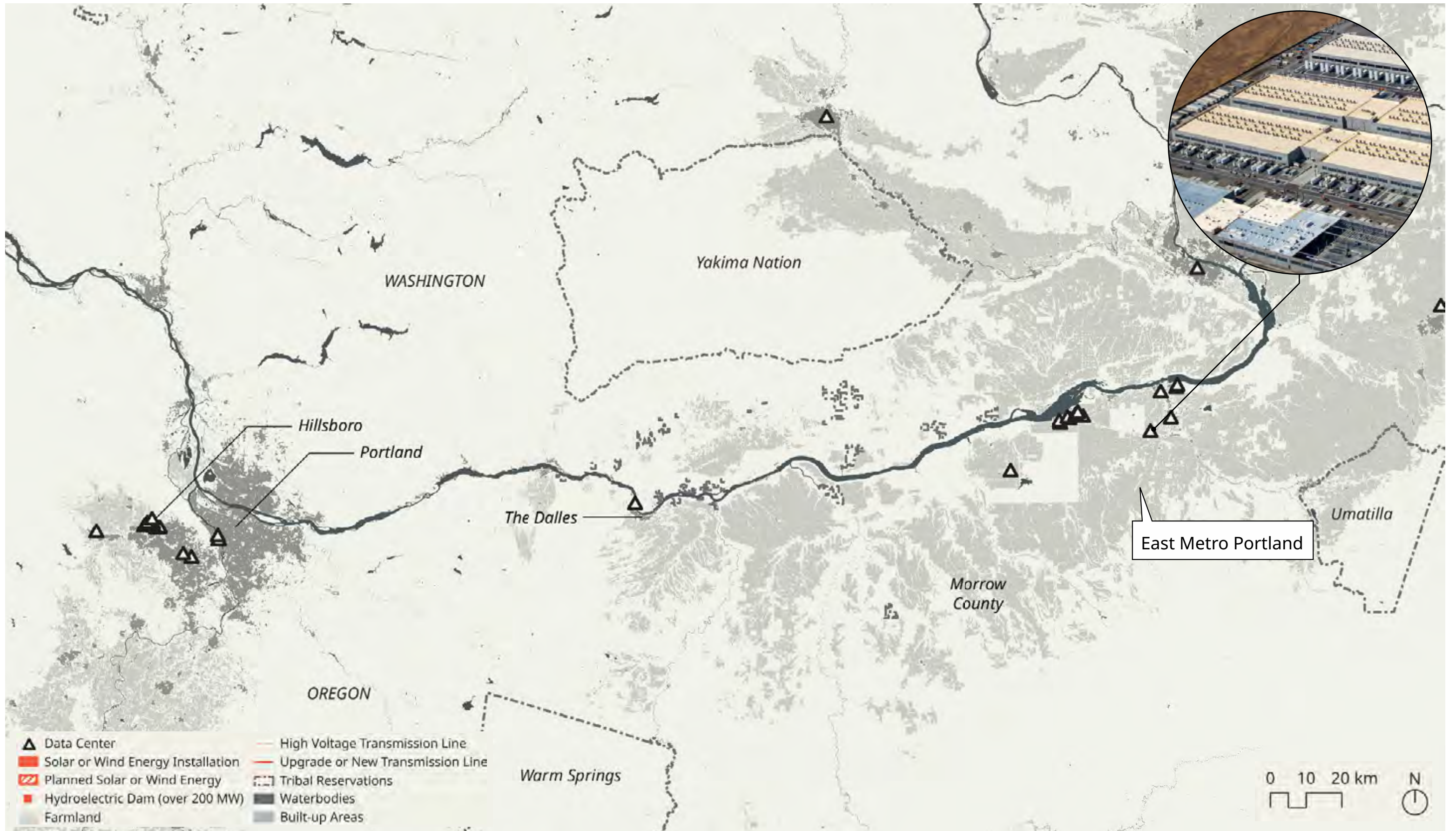
Oregon

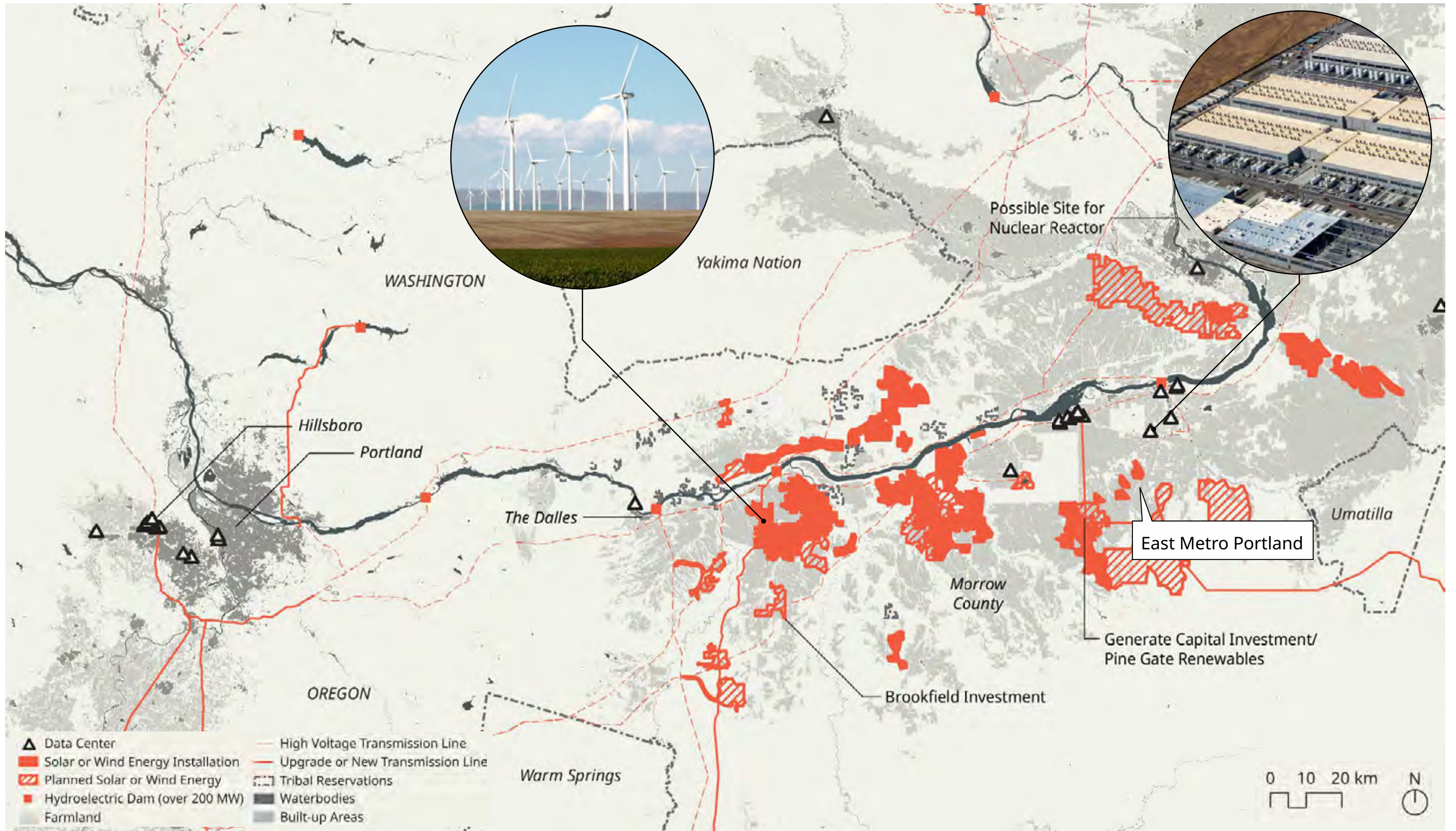
Water Infrastructure

Data Center

Energy Infrastructure

Google's data center in The Dalles, Oregon



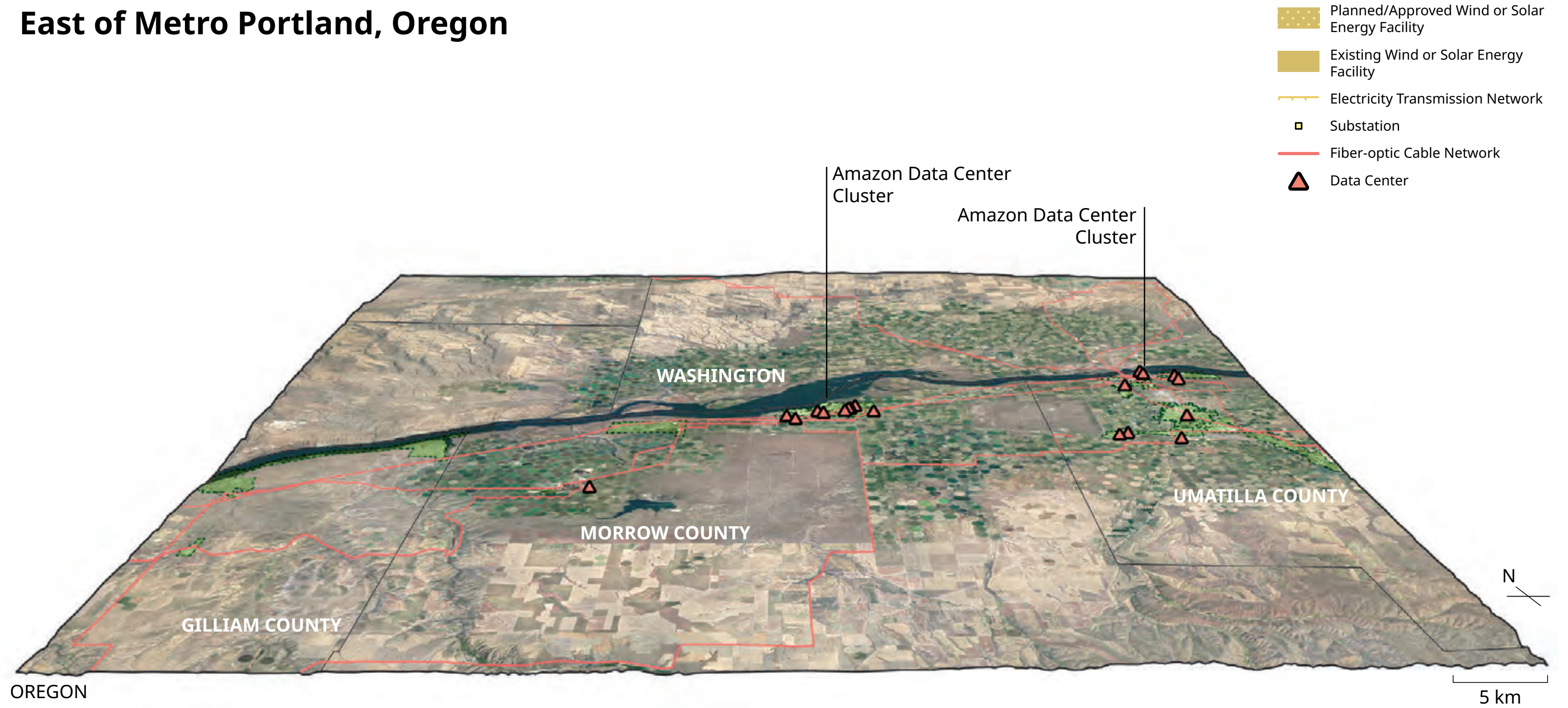


East of Metro Portland, Oregon

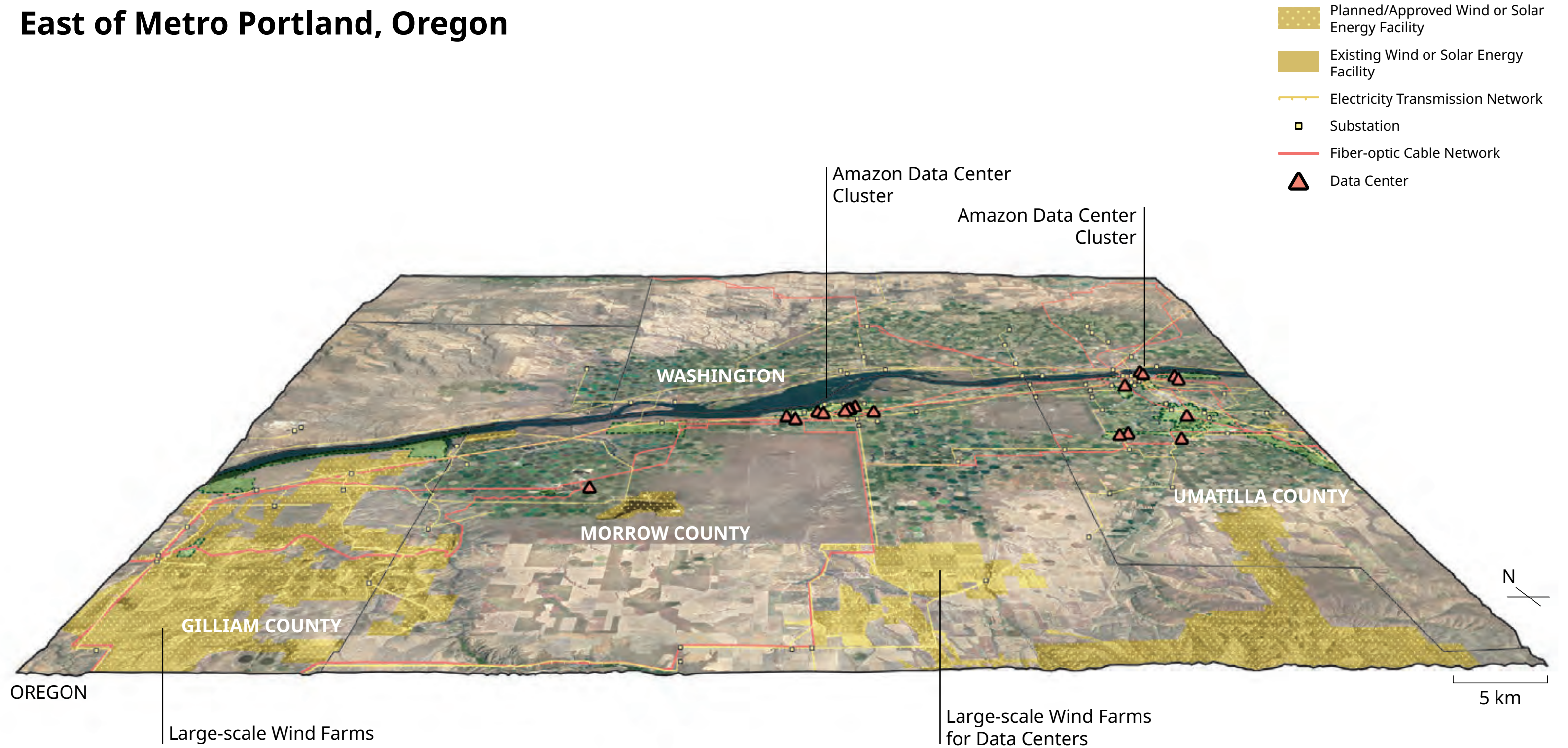
- Planned/Approved Wind or Solar Energy Facility
- Existing Wind or Solar Energy Facility
- Electricity Transmission Network
- Substation
- Fiber-optic Cable Network
- Data Center



East of Metro Portland, Oregon



East of Metro Portland, Oregon





One of Oregon's smallest utilities is suddenly among the state's biggest polluters. Why? Amazon data centers



Amazon, despite climate pledge, fought to kill emissions bill in Oregon

The Washington Post

Amazon ramps up clean power for Oregon data centers. Does that mean less for everyone else?



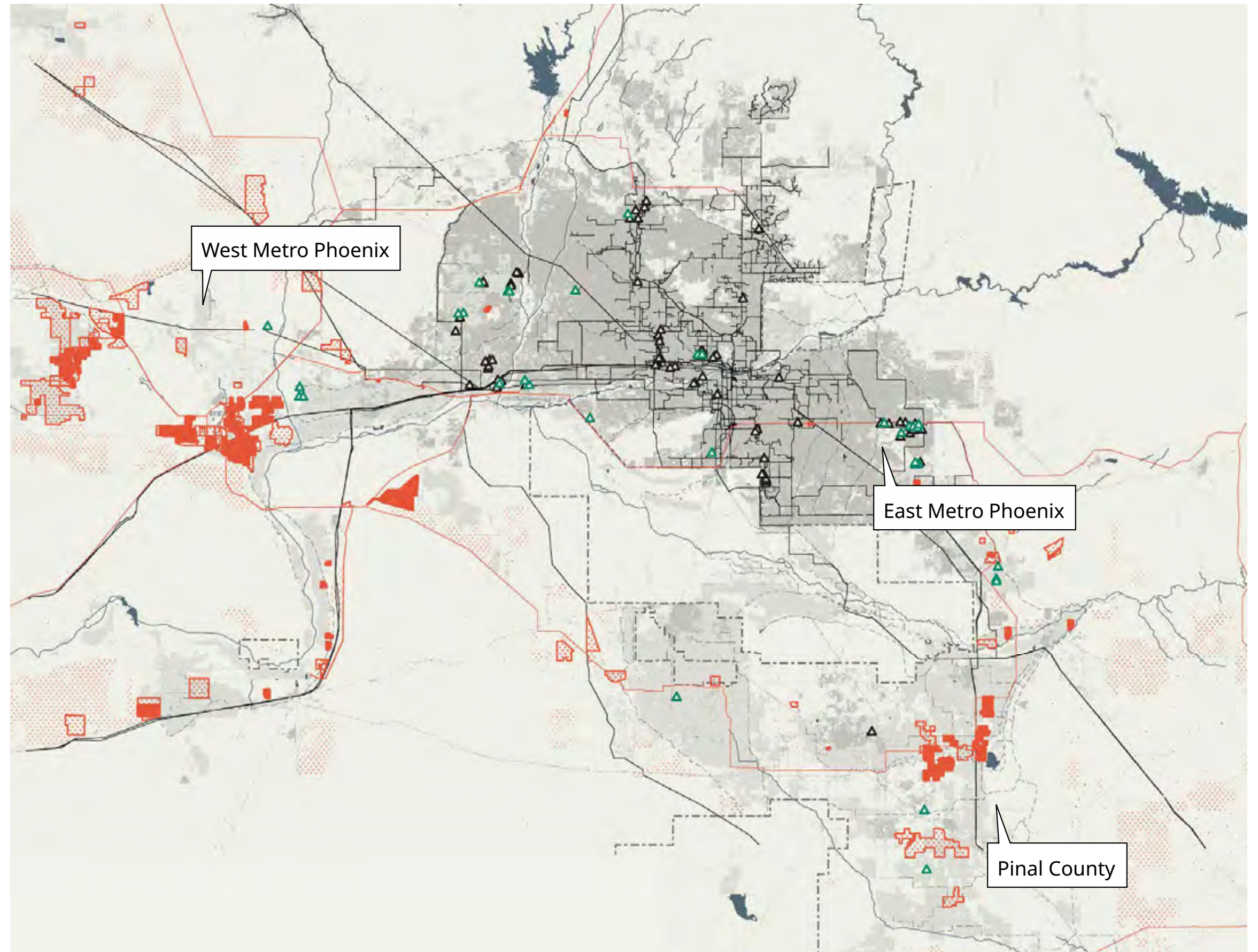
“THE PRECEDENT IS FLINT”: HOW OREGON’S DATA CENTER BOOM IS SUPERCHARGING A WATER CRISIS

RollingStone

Amazon's data centers in Morrow County, Oregon

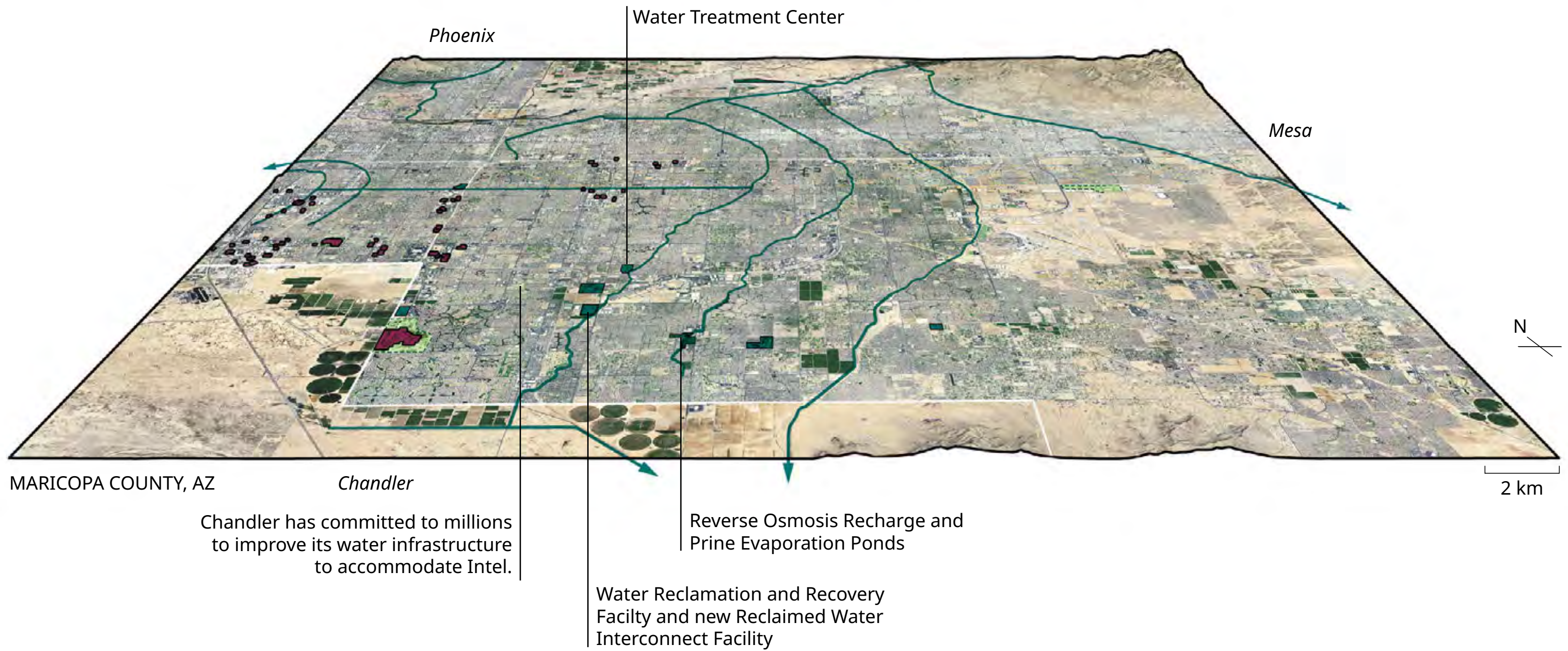
Metro Phoenix, Arizona

Phoenix Metro Data Center and Solar Energy Infrastructure Expansion, 2026



East Metro Phoenix, AZ

- Semiconductor Manuf. Ecosystem
- FTZ
- Canal
- Water Facilities



East Metro Phoenix, AZ



High-tech Expansion

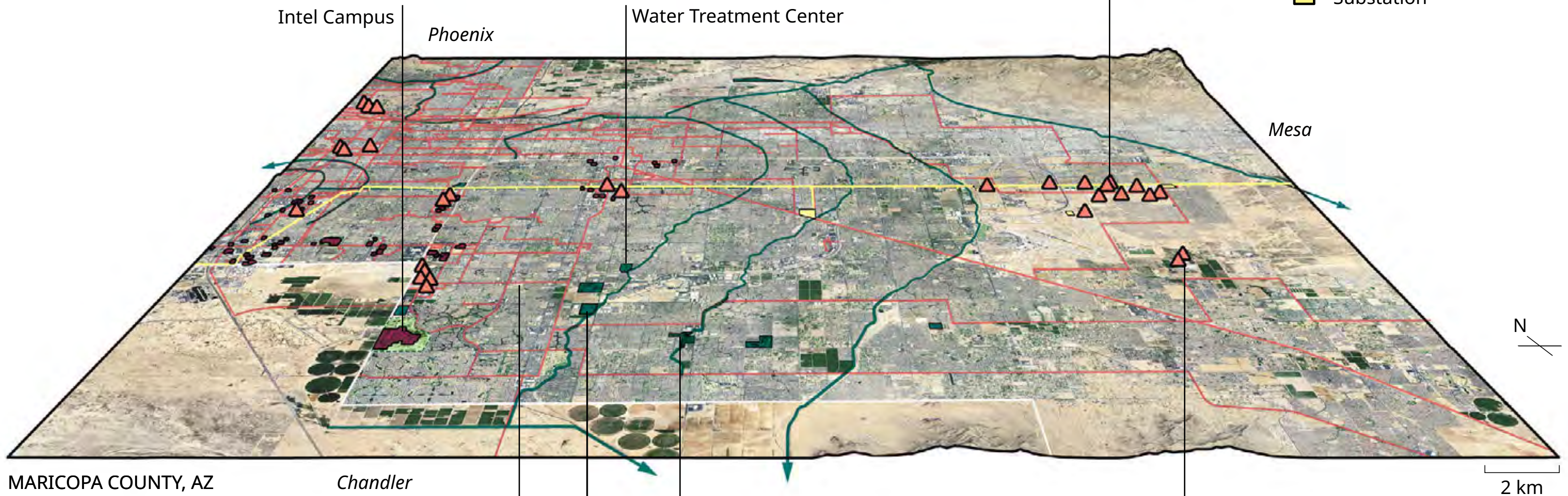
Higher Water Access in Wealthy Neighborhoods

Uneven water landscapes with Intel's expansion in the background, Arizona, 2022

East Metro Phoenix, AZ

- Semiconductor Manuf. Ecosystem
- FTZ
- Canal
- Water Facilities
- Data Center
- Electricity Transmission Network
- Substation

Hyperscale data centers (Facebook, Meta, Apple, and others) at the Elliott Road Technology Corridor



Chandler has committed to millions to improve its water infrastructure to accommodate Intel.

Reverse Osmosis Recharge and Prine Evaporation Ponds

Water Reclamation and Recovery Facility and new Reclaimed Water Interconnect Facility

Massive data center campuses.



Meta's data center complex in Mesa, AZ. Source: Meta

Pinal County, AZ

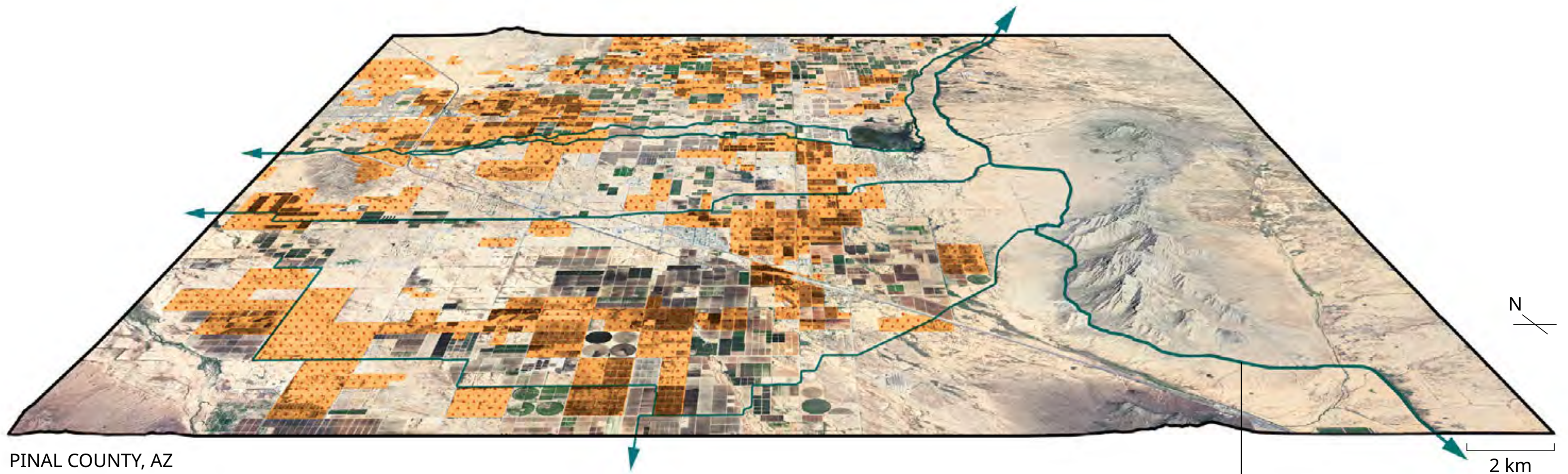


2 km

PINAL COUNTY, AZ

Pinal County, AZ

- Canal
- Planned/Approved New Development



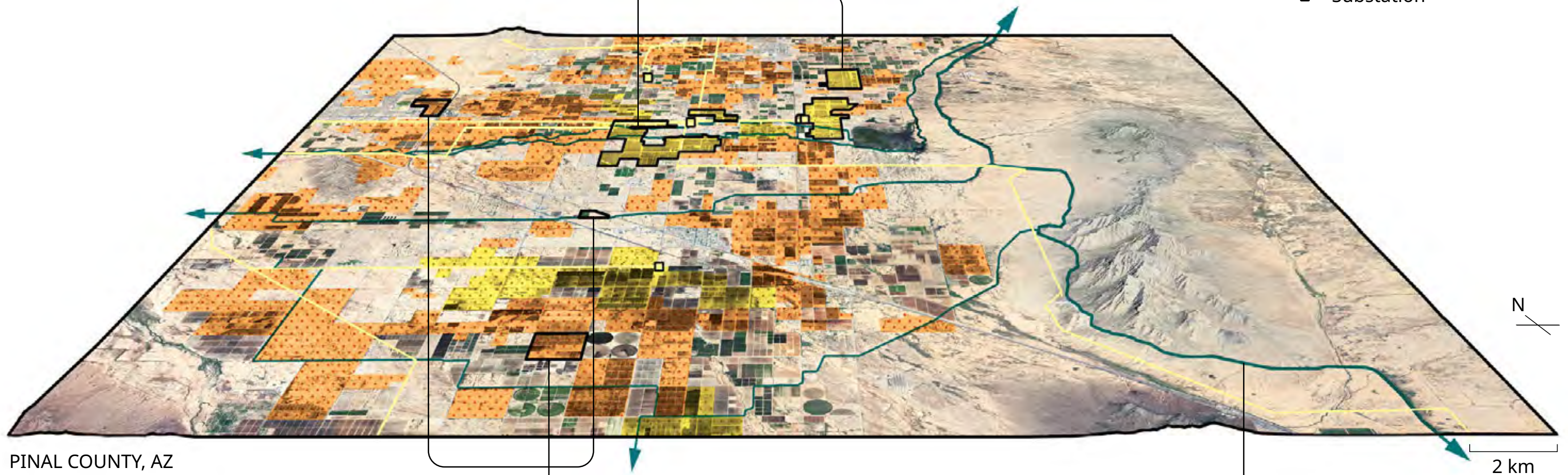
PINAL COUNTY, AZ

Central Arizona Pipeline

Pinal County, AZ

- Canal
- Planned/Approved New Development
- Planned/Approved Wind or Solar Energy Facility
- Existing Wind or Solar Energy Facility
- Electricity Transmission Network
- Substation

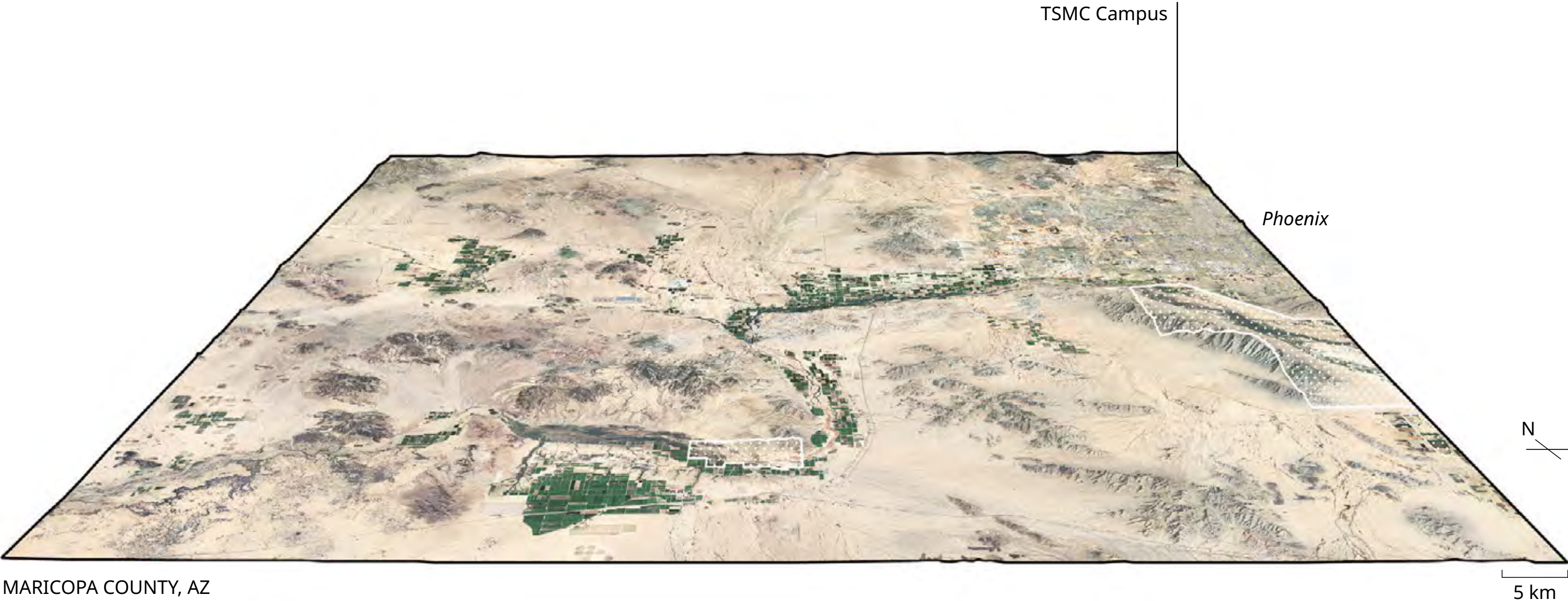
Cluster of utility-scale solar and battery projects supporting Meta data centers



Proposals for hyperscale data centers

Central Arizona Pipeline

West Metro Phoenix, AZ

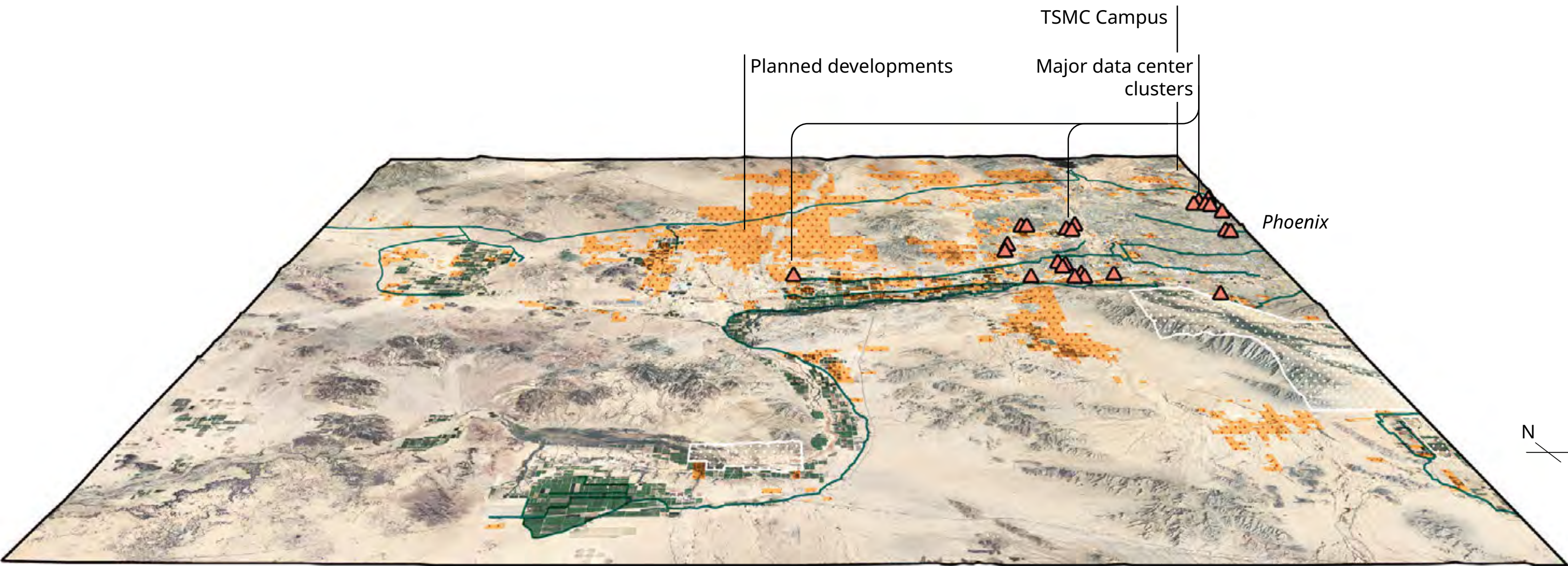


MARICOPA COUNTY, AZ

5 km

West Metro Phoenix, AZ

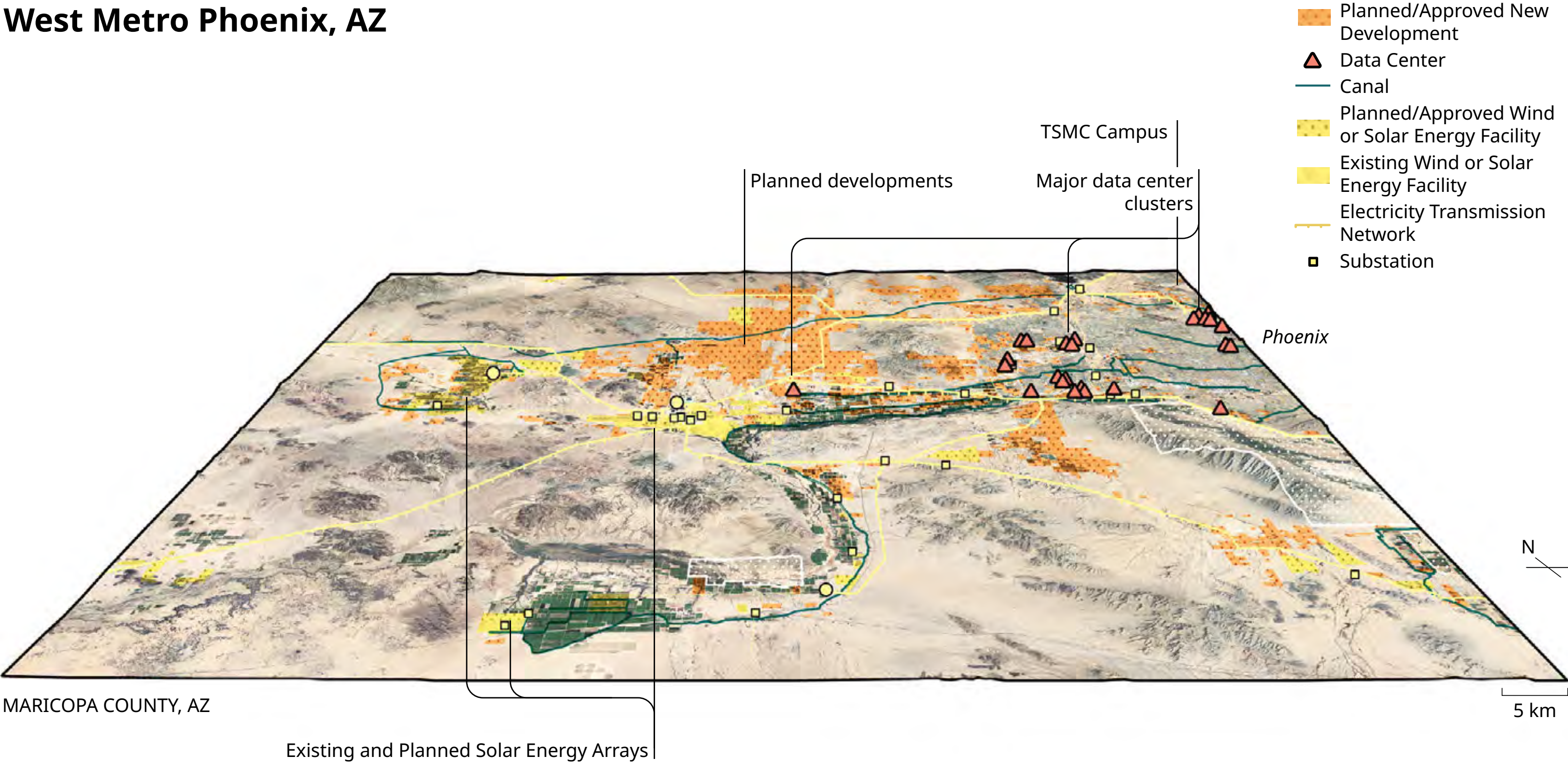
- Planned/Approved New Development
- Data Center
- Canal



MARICOPA COUNTY, AZ

5 km

West Metro Phoenix, AZ



MARICOPA COUNTY, AZ

5 km



Phoenix

Utility-scale Solar Energy
Expansion

Massive Solar Arrays in West Valley near Phoenix Metro, 2024

Justin Kollar / 2025

(3) How are policy and regulation changing?

State Policy



Governor Josh Stein, North Carolina, signing Executive Order 24, creating an AI Leadership Council and an AI Accelerator within the Department of Information Technology, September 2025.

Areas of State Policy

- » Public AI procurement and institutional adoption
- » State preemption and statutory override
- » Utility regulation and infrastructure governance
- » Fiscal oversight and procedural controls
- » Accelerated permitting and siting streamlining
- » Moratoria

Federal Policy

THE WHITE HOUSE



Winning the Race
**AMERICA'S
AI ACTION PLAN**

JULY 2025

Areas of Federal Policy

- » Energy expansion and dedicated power supply
- » Accelerated federal permitting and environmental review
- » Federal AI procurement and institutional deployment
- » AI export promotion and allied market development
- » Federal preemption or constraint on state AI regulation
- » *Moratoria?*

LEGISLATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

National Policy Framework



Artificial Intelligence

MARCH 2026

II.

Safeguarding and Strengthening American Communities

AI development, including data infrastructure buildout, should strengthen American communities and small businesses through economic growth and energy dominance, while ensuring communities are protected from harmful impacts.

- In accordance with the [Ratepayer Protection Pledge](#), Congress should ensure that residential ratepayers do not experience increased electricity costs as a result of new AI data center construction and operation.
- At the same time, Congress should streamline federal permitting for AI infrastructure construction and operation so AI developers can develop or procure on-site and behind-the-meter power generation to accelerate AI infrastructure buildout and enhance grid reliability.
- Congress should augment existing law enforcement efforts to combat AI-enabled impersonation scams and fraud that target vulnerable populations such as seniors.
- Congress should ensure that the appropriate agencies within the national security enterprise possess sufficient technical capacity to understand frontier AI model capabilities and any associated national security considerations and establish plans to mitigate potential concerns, including through consultation with frontier AI model developers.
- Congress should provide AI resources to small businesses, such as grants, tax incentives, and technical assistance programs, to support wider deployment of AI tools across American industry.

VII.

Establishing a Federal Policy Framework, Preempting Cumbersome State AI Laws

The federal government must establish a federal AI policy framework to protect American rights, support innovation, and prevent a fragmented patchwork of state regulations that would hinder our national competitiveness, while respecting federalism and State rights.

- Congress should preempt state AI laws that impose undue burdens to ensure a minimally burdensome national standard consistent with these recommendations, not fifty discordant ones.
- This national standard should respect key principles of federalism and not preempt:
 - The traditional police powers retained by the states to enforce laws of general applicability against AI developers and users, including particular laws to protect children, prevent fraud, and protect consumers.
 - State zoning laws, including state authorities, to determine the placement of AI infrastructure.
 - Requirements governing a state's own use of AI, whether through procurement or services they provide like law enforcement and public education.
- Preemption must ensure that State laws do not govern areas better suited to the Federal Government or act contrary to the United States' national strategy to achieve global AI dominance.
 - States should not be permitted to regulate AI development, because it is an inherently interstate phenomenon with key foreign policy and national security implications.
 - States should not unduly burden Americans' use of AI for activity that would be lawful if performed without AI.
 - States should not be permitted to penalize AI developers for a third party's unlawful conduct involving their models.

Emerging Directions

Energy is a Key Consideration

Economic Risk and Competitiveness

Satya Nadella (CEO, Microsoft): “The biggest issue we are now having is not a compute glut, but it’s power—the ability to get the builds done fast enough close to power.”

National Security

Eric Schmidt (Former Google CEO): “If [China] comes to superintelligence first, it changes the dynamic of power globally... What we need from you [Congress] is energy in all forms, renewable, non-renewable, whatever. It needs to be there, and it needs to be there quickly.”

*Industrial Policy

America’s AI Action Plan (White House): “We need to build and maintain vast AI infrastructure and the energy to power it... ‘Build, Baby, Build!’”



Sec. 2. Definitions. For purposes of this order:

(a) “Data Center Project” means a facility that requires greater than 100 megawatts (MW) of new load dedicated to AI inference, training, simulation, or synthetic data generation.

(b) “Covered Components” means materials, products, and infrastructure that are required to build Data Center Projects or otherwise upon which Data Center Projects depend, including:

(i) energy infrastructure, such as transmission lines, natural gas pipelines or laterals, substations, switchyards, transformers, switchgear, and system protective facilities;

(ii) natural gas turbines, coal power equipment, nuclear power equipment, geothermal power equipment, and any other dispatchable baseload energy sources, including electrical infrastructure (including backup power supply) constructed or otherwise used principally to serve a Data Center Project;

(iii) semiconductors and semiconductor materials, such as wafers, dies, and packaged integrated circuits;

(iv) networking equipment, such as switches and routers; and

(v) data storage, such as hardware storage systems, software for data management and protection, and integrated services that work with public cloud providers.

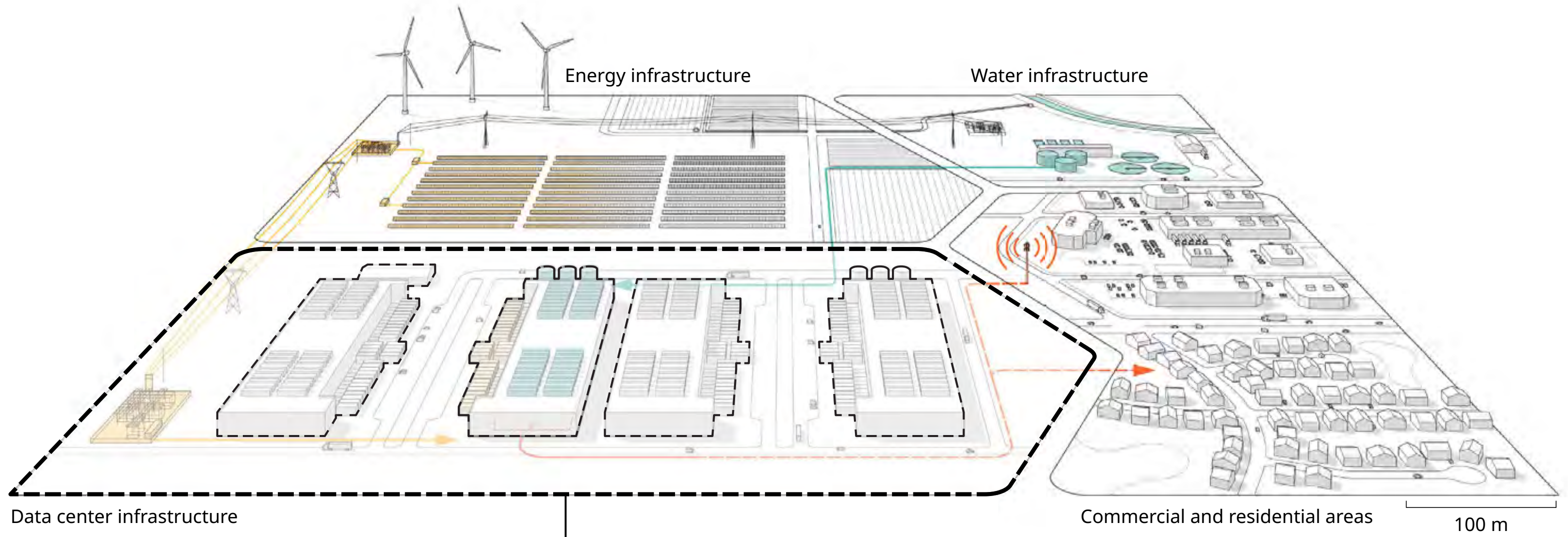


“Texas is the epicenter of AI development, where companies can pair innovation with expanding energy.”

Governor Greg Abbott, November 14, 2025

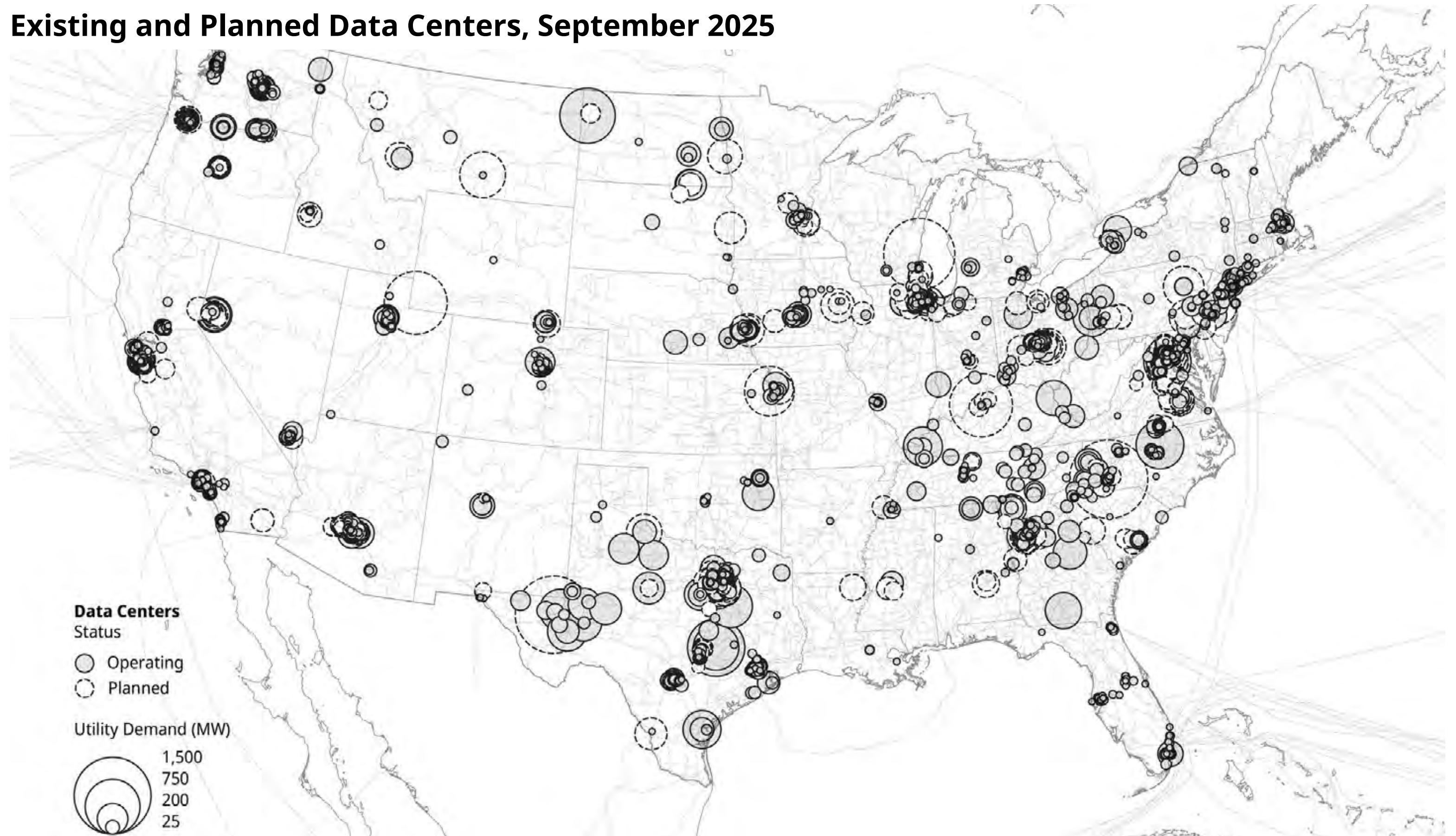
Greg Abbott and Google CEO Sundar Pichai announcing massive digital infrastructure plans in November 14, 2025 in Midlothian, TX. Joined by U.S. Deputy Secretary of Energy James Danly, Google Global Head of Data Center Energy Amanda Peterson Corio, and other Google leaders and state officials.

Powered Land

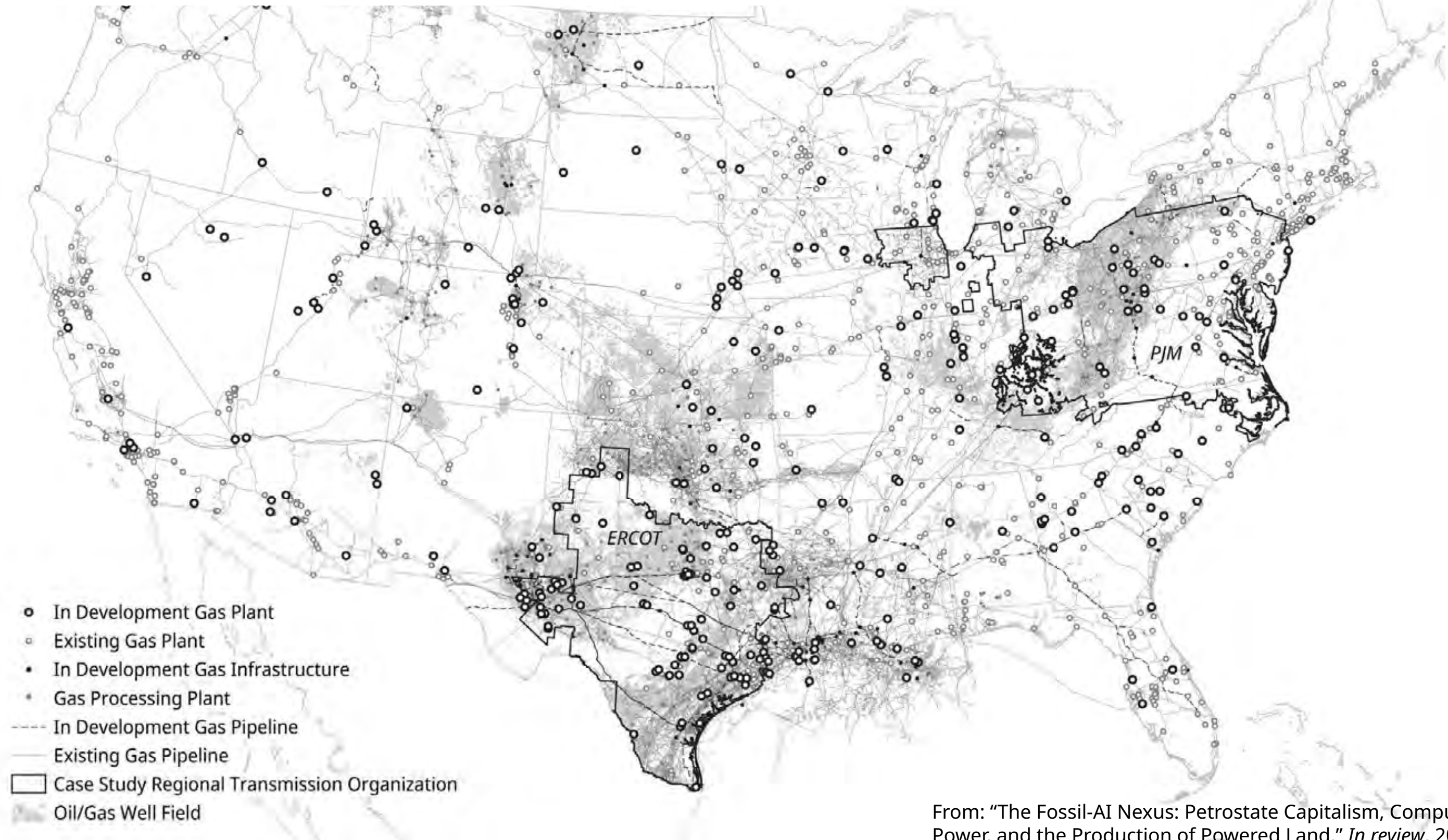


“Powered land” = ownership over land, entitlements, permits, financing, resource deals, and possibly data center shell and other infrastructure

Existing and Planned Data Centers, September 2025

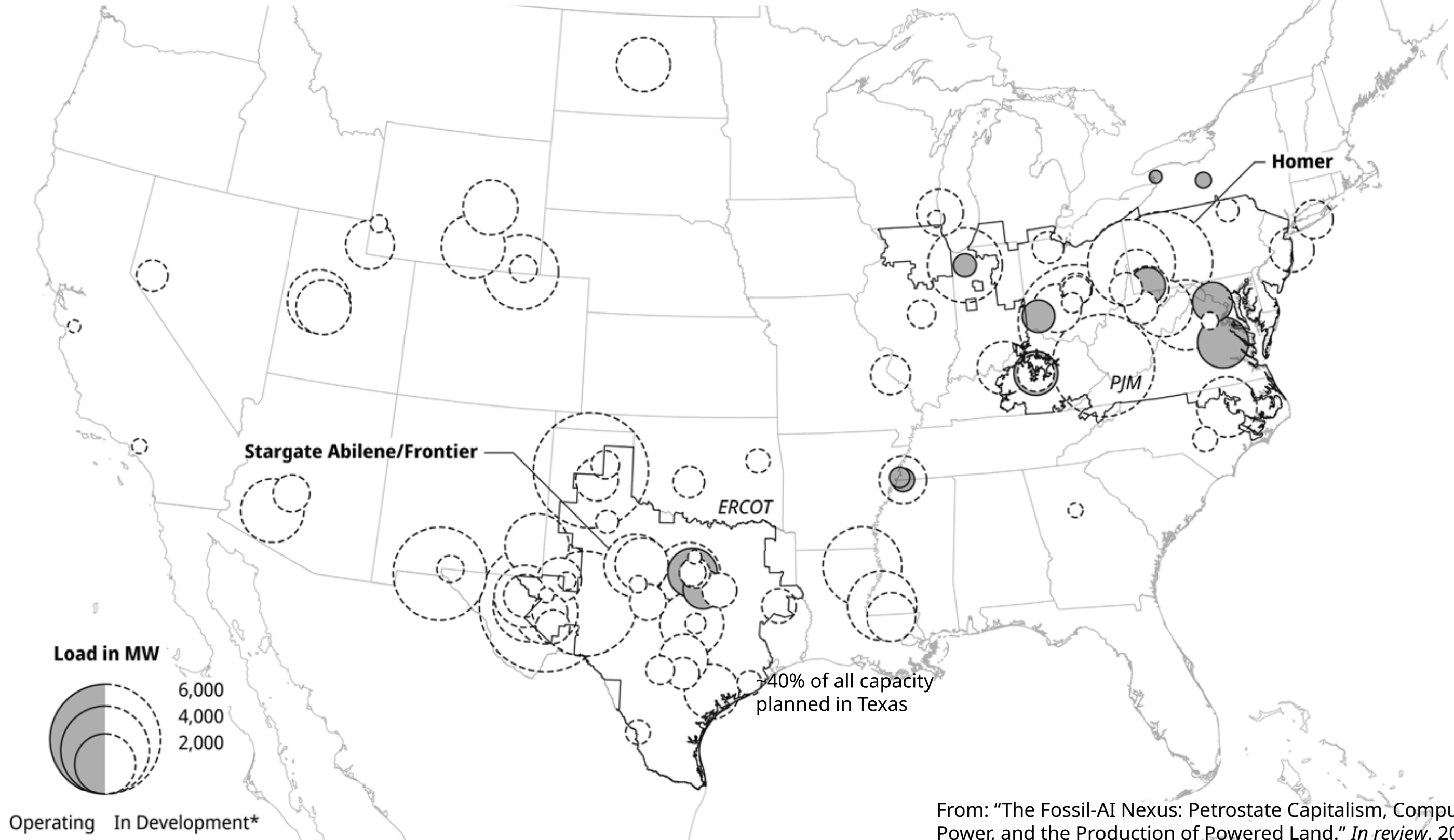


Gas Extraction, Processing, and Pipeline Networks, Including Proposed Gas Infrastructure, in the Contiguous United States, 2026



From: "The Fossil-AI Nexus: Petrostate Capitalism, Computing Power, and the Production of Powered Land." *In review*, 2026.

Co-Located Gas- and Oil-Fired Power Plants Serving Data Centers: Capacity and Development Status in the Contiguous United States, February 2026



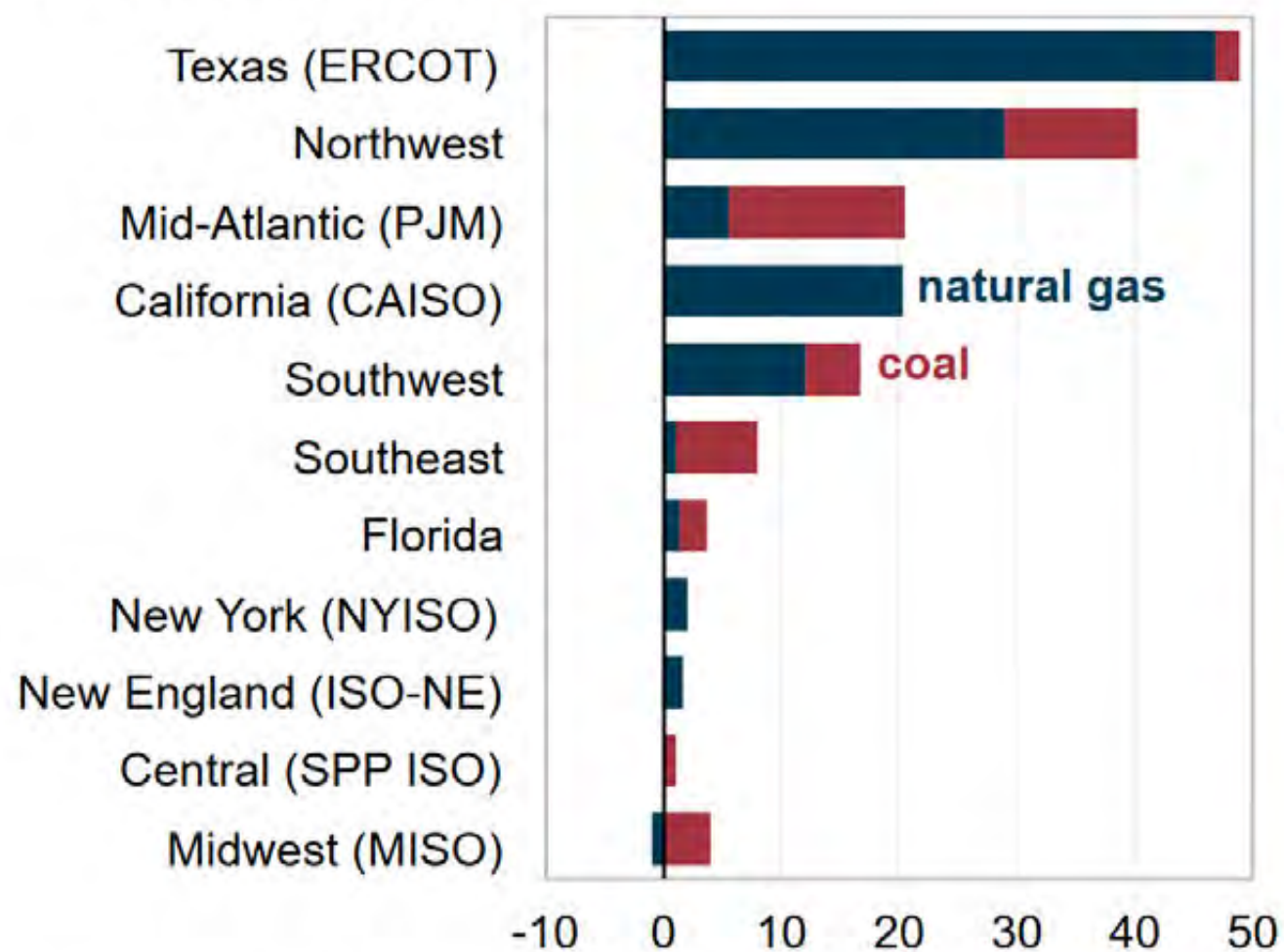
From: "The Fossil-AI Nexus: Petrostate Capitalism, Computing Power, and the Production of Powered Land." *In review*, 2026.



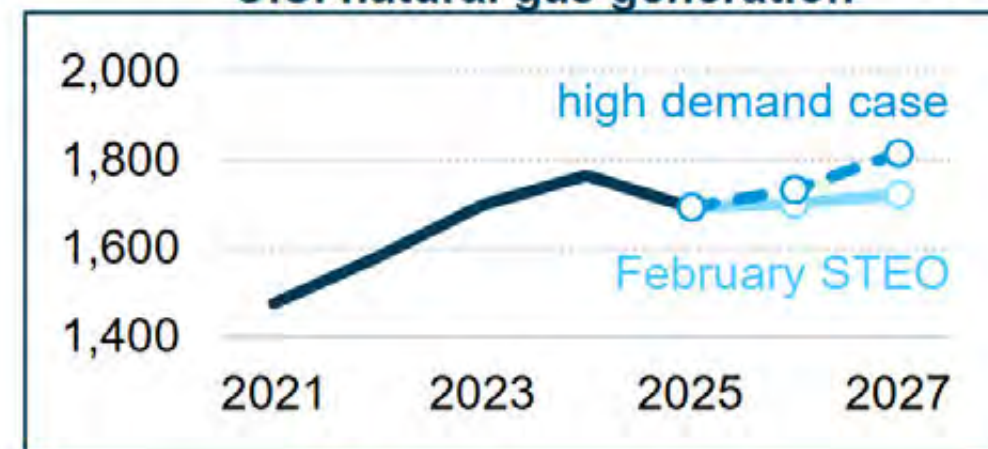
Aerial view of Calpine (Constellation Energy) gas plant and co-located CyrusOne data center (Global Infrastructure Partners). Source: Author, 2026.

Comparison of high demand and baseline growth forecasts, 2026–2027

billion kilowatthours



U.S. natural gas generation



U.S. coal generation



Data source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, *Short-Term Energy Outlook* (STEO), February 2026, and UPLAN Network Power Model

“Fossil Generation Could Rise with Faster-than-Expected Growth in Data Center Power Demand.” 2026. U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA). March 12, 2026.

Key Takeaways

Data centers are part of a broader set of AI infrastructure that reshape land, water, and energy systems

Transparency issues remain, creating distrust and poor basis for planning

Varied economic, social, and environmental impacts based on geography/institutional context

Dynamic, changing, and uncertain federal and state regulatory context

Likely to see divergent processes and outcomes from state-to-state, community-to-community

Thank You!

FROM DAIRYLAND TO DATALAND

Best Planning Practices for when there's no way a community could have planned for this



AGENDA

Introduction

The Where, Who, Why, How, and What of Mount Pleasant

About the Microsoft Project

What to get done before a Hyperscale project arrives

The approval process outlined

Reviewing a hyperscale project site plan

Words to the wise

Making better outcomes: ideas for mitigation, harm reduction, and community benefit

Closing

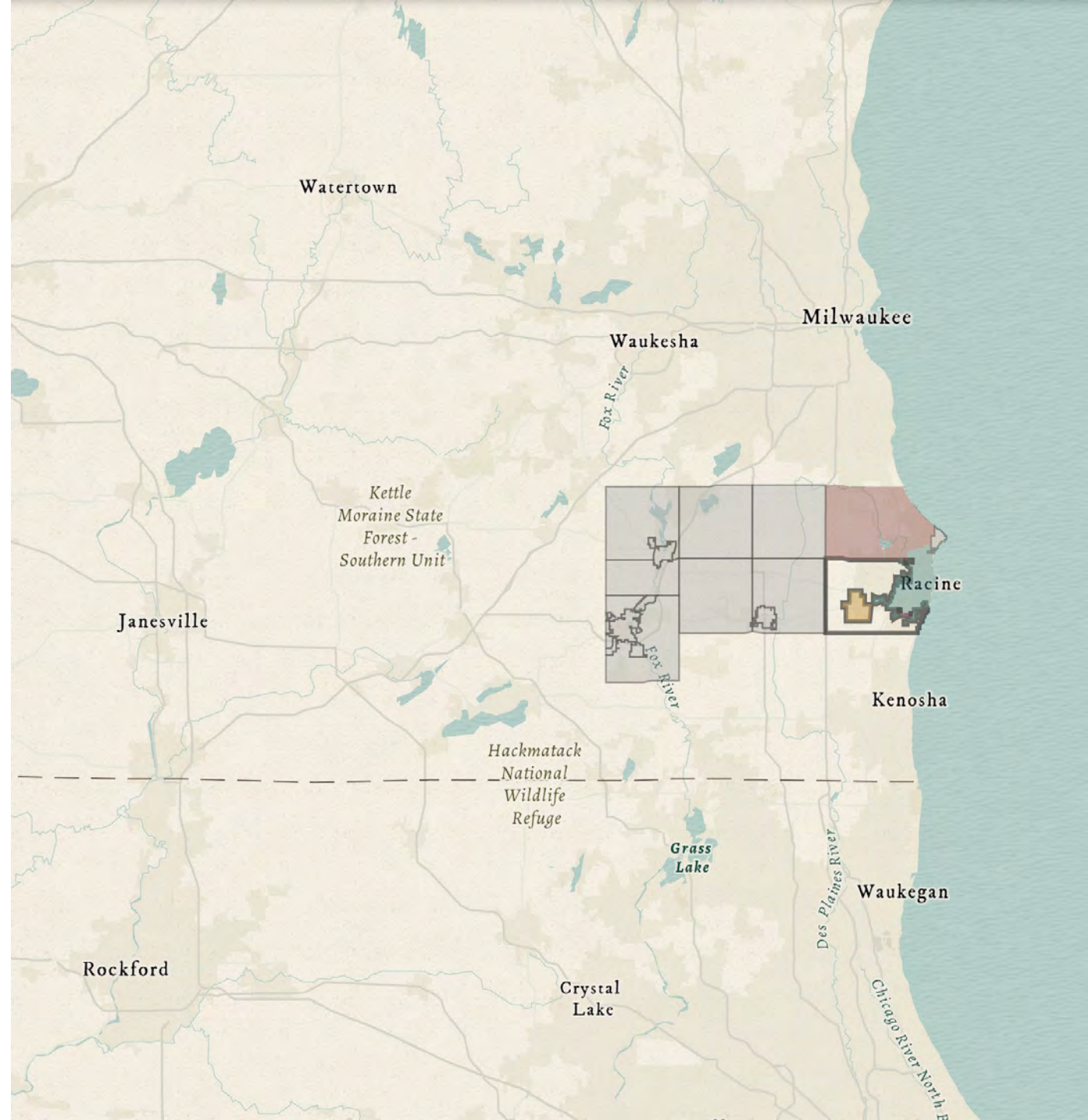
Q&A

4/20/2026



WHERE MOUNT PLEASANT?

Located in Racine County, Wisconsin.
25 miles south of Milwaukee.
60 Miles north of Chicago.





WHO MOUNT PLEASANT?

ROBIN PALM, AICP

- 9 years Planner II | Community Development Department for the Village of Mount Pleasant, WI
- APA-WI Board Representative for Southeast, WI since 2021
- MURP, Virginia Commonwealth University, 2014
- @Boubonplanner on your favorite social media
- Known to enjoy video games





WHY MOUNT PLEASANT?

- Good location between two major population centers
- Large amounts of undeveloped land and farmland
- Infrastructure support
- Water aplenty and beer gets cold on the porch.





HOW MOUNT PLEASANT?

The 2017 Foxconn project
literally and figuratively paved
the way for Microsoft



4/20/2026

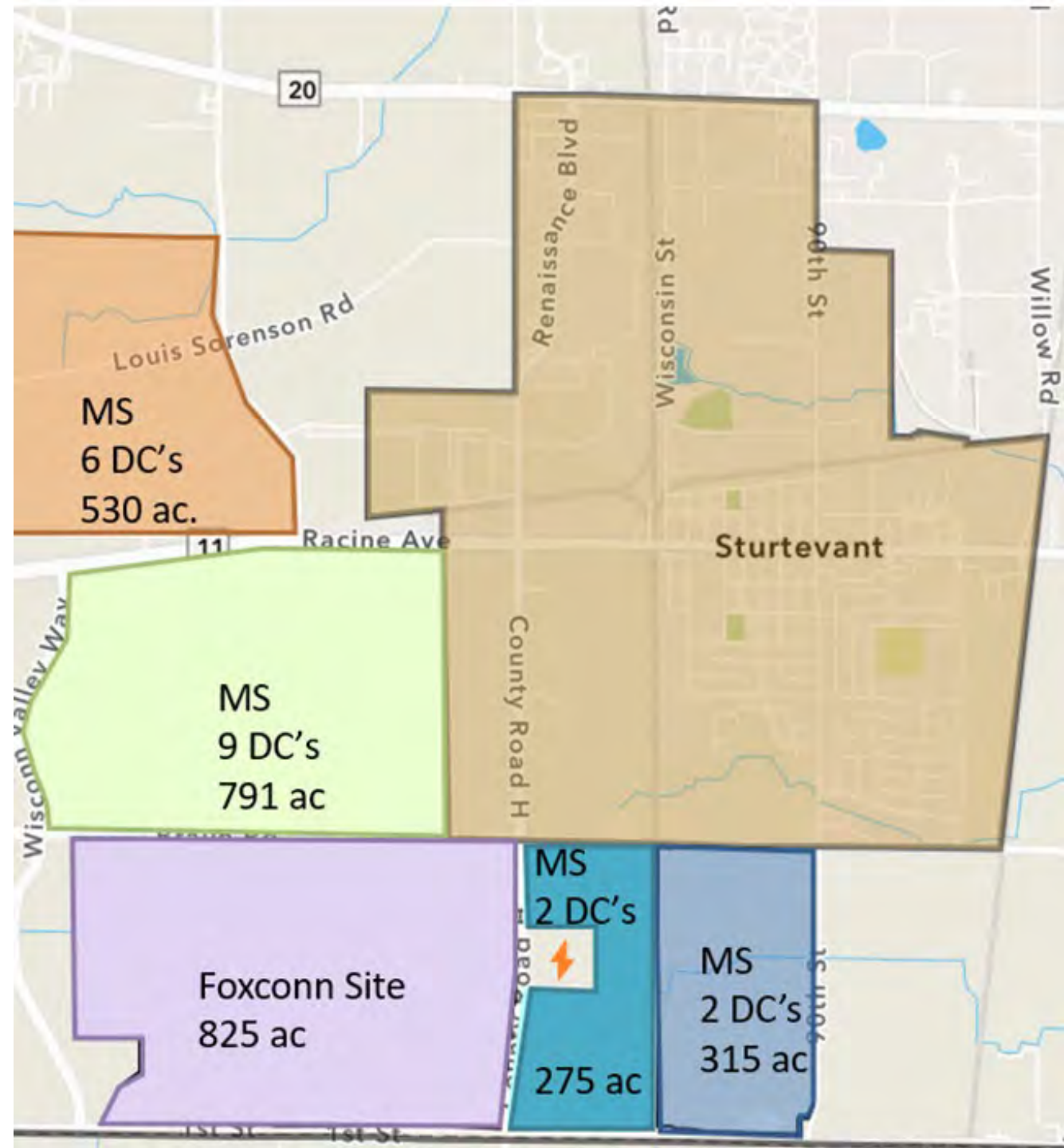


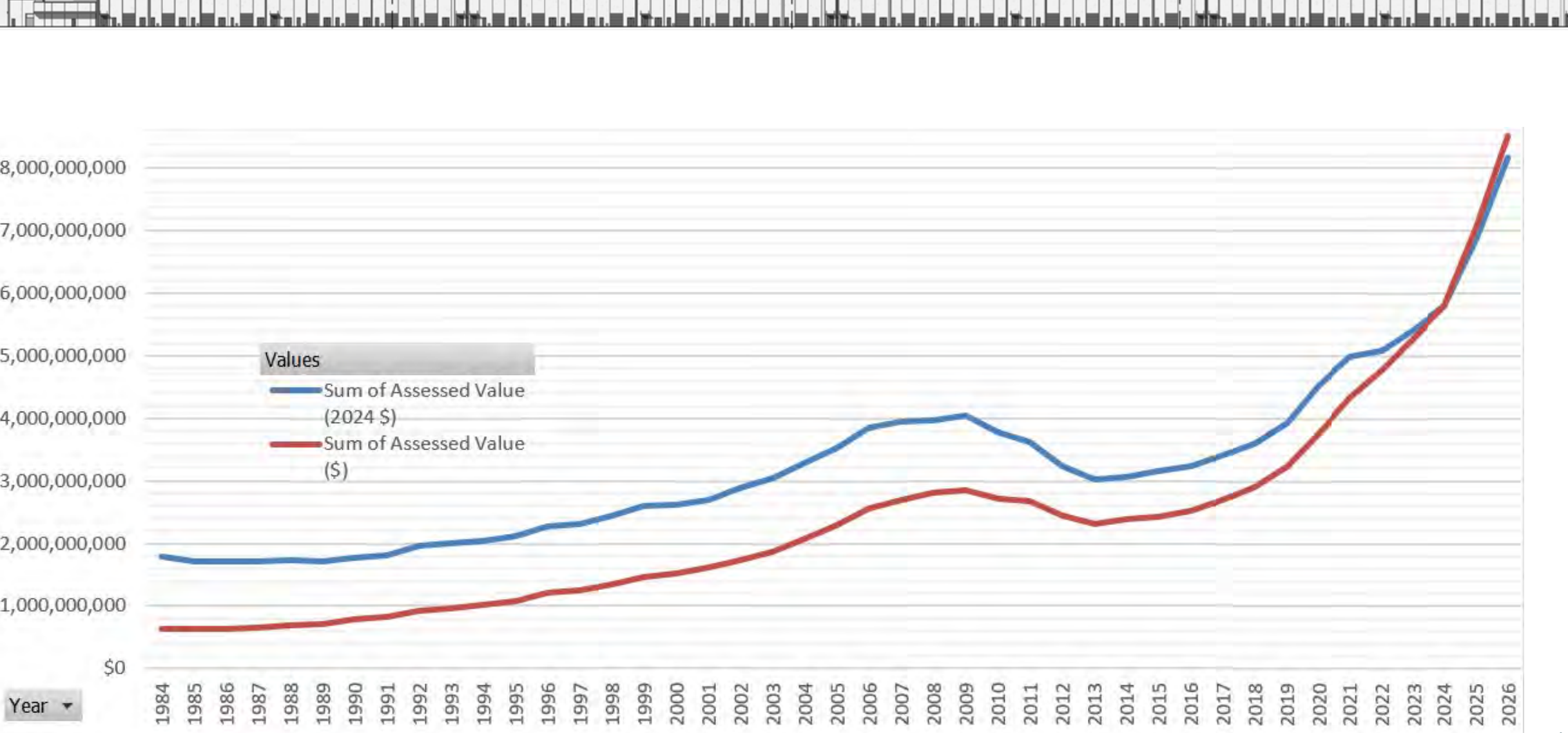
WITHOUT FOXCONN, THERE IS NO MICROSOFT

- Foxconn project installed all the water/power infrastructure
- The TID's increment and funding continued funding the Economic Development staff needed to pitch the site
- The public investments already made attracted and still presented a good deal to Microsoft.
- The statewide push and special legislation that created the Foxconn project isn't likely to have appeared for a data center in 2023, and much less so in 2026.

WHAT MOUNT PLEASANT?

- Time for some numbers
- 19 Data Centers
- 10 million Square Feet.
- 1911 acres
- Forecasted assessed value of \$15,000,000,000.
- Will make Mount Pleasant the third ranked municipality by assessed Value in Wisconsin, behind only Madison and Milwaukee





4/20/2026

Who regulates what in Wisconsin?

  
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION (PSC)

   (PSC)

  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES (WI DNR)



 
DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY AND PUBLIC SERVICES (DSPS)

  
WI ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORP (WEDC) & WI DEPT OF REVENUE (DOR)



"What I hear when I'm being yelled at is people caring loudly at me"

GETTING READY FOR A DATA CENTER



4/20/2026



PRO TIP: PREPARE BEFORE A DEVELOPMENT ARRIVES

- Inadvisable to enter negotiations with an outdated “empty” zoning code
- Try to remove the all appearances of “the planner’s boogeyman” : subjective approvals with criteria that is vague, absent, or not within a legitimate government interest.
- Determine the point of no return: find the stage where the electeds and citizenry can weigh in and turn down a project with no legal consequence.
- Remove as much discretionary decisions as possible after that stage.

PROBLEMS ARISE IF AN APPLICATION GETS IN THE DOOR BEFORE REFORM



- Vested rights

A Developer can legally bind a municipality to the code that was present on the day of their application

**assuming their application was complete and legal, of course*

- If contracts are signed first, new regulations will have a hard time not appearing targeted, arbitrary, and capricious.
- Moratoriums are only defensible with a limited duration and/or a specific goal



IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT INDUSTRIAL ZONES

- Mega-project readiness is also community-capacity planning.
- Even a "temporary" surge of construction workers will be on the job and living in the community, longer than a student seeking a bachelor's degree
- The business world is becoming more housing conscious, it's a huge factor in worker attraction and retention
- Mount Pleasant's 2020 code update also changed residential zoning, moving from large-lot single-family assumptions toward more flexible one- and two-family development, which was critical now that growth pressure rises.

• *Per APA: In order to award CE credits, all presentations must have this graphic*



“Warehousing, wholesaling and freight movement: any of the following:

Establishments used primarily for the storage, management, processing, and transmission of digital data, which houses computer or network equipment, systems, servers, appliances, and other associated components related to digital data storage and operations.”

DEFINE THE USE; YES.
BUT REGULATE THE IMPACTS, NOT THE
DEFINITION



KEEP APPROVALS STRUCTURED AND STANDARDS-BASED

- Predictable review tools > ad hoc bargaining
- Use clear adopted standards and measurable criteria
- avoid open-ended CUP/PUD negotiations
- Remember, a good code will be in every closed door meeting and be implicit behind every signature.
- In Mount Pleasant: Since 2017, Wisconsin State law has pushed CUPs have toward administrative/quasi judicial determination; needed written standards supported using substantial evidence
- Planned Unit Developments = “a la carte zoning.” Often turns into an emergency band-aid for bad zoning codes.



Step by Step through the normal everyday process with a case you don't see everyday

THE LOCAL PLANNERS POV: HOW THE APPROVAL PROCESS ACTUALLY WORKS



4/20/2026

THE APPROVAL PROCESS

Determine where your role would be brought aboard in the list on the right...

How many decisions have been finalized by that point?

- A. Letter of Intent (LOI) or Memo of understanding (MOU)
- B. Development Agreement (Local/State)
- C. Financial Incentives (Local/State)
- D. Public land-use legislative approvals (comp plan/zoning)
- E. Special/Conditional Use
- F. Site plan review
- G. Variances
- H. Oversight/Enforcement



THE LOI/MOU

- This is project code name stage.
- If a planner does actually know something here, they can't disclose anything
- If there needs to be state level maneuvering or state level financial packages, it will be done here.



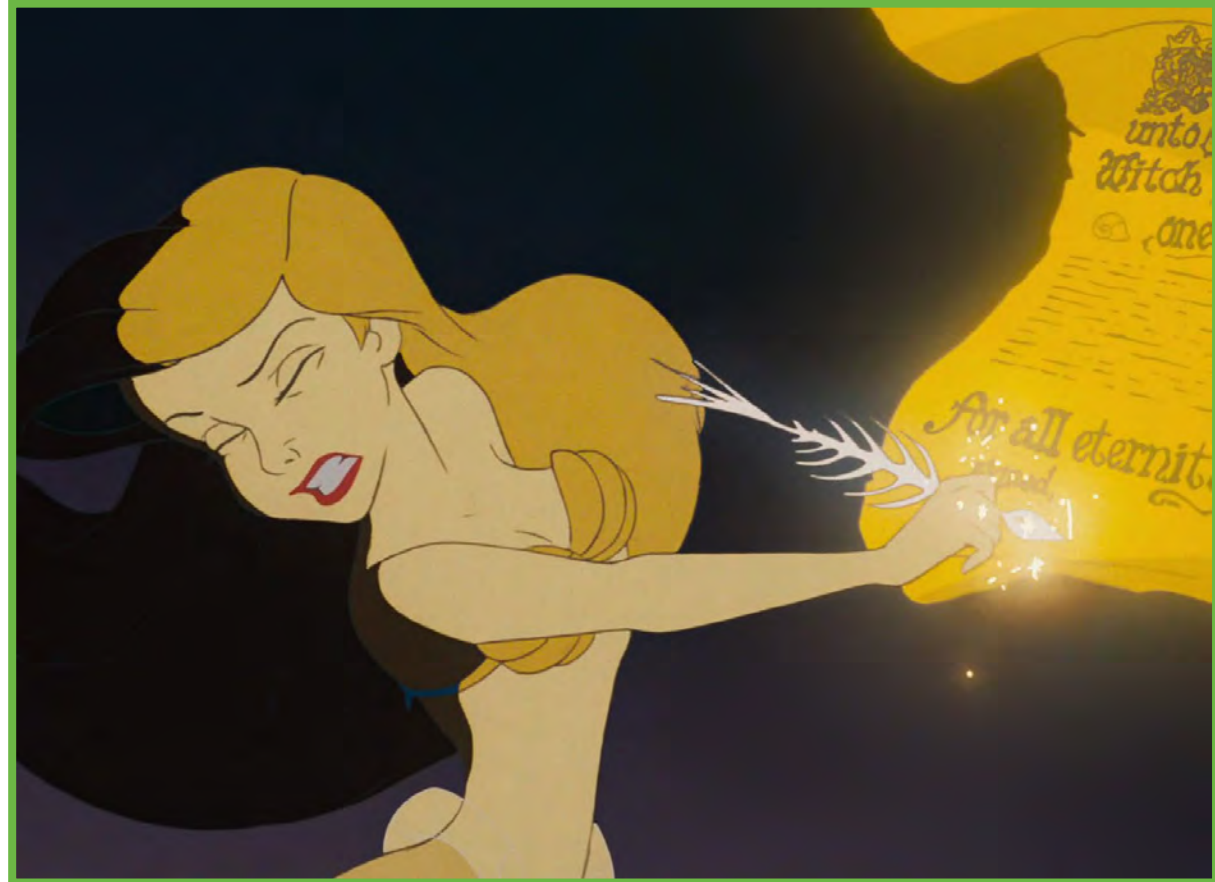
"The Room Where it Happens"

THE DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT

Contains: timing, cost-sharing, extra mitigation, community-benefit items, reporting, potential “nice-to-have” asks if you have leverage.

They should support your planning regs and process, not preempt them or overwrite them

Warning: a municipality can sign a contract early enough that staff & elected officials feel committed before public approvals even occur. That can be risky.



*Having the public hearing *before* signing a big contract can be very wise move.*

ENTITLEMENTS: COMPREHENSIVE PLANS, REZONING, PROPERTY DIVISIONS, ETC

These are often the zoning and planning decisions that are

A) Discretionary

And/or

B) Legislative

Comprehensive Plan- “What do we as a community envision here?”

Rezoning “Should we as a community change the allowed usage of this area?”

With a big project, these are huge deals, treats these as the “Last Stop” before the point of no return.





The application sits on your desk.

And around it.

And under it.

Why are there so many pages, anyway?

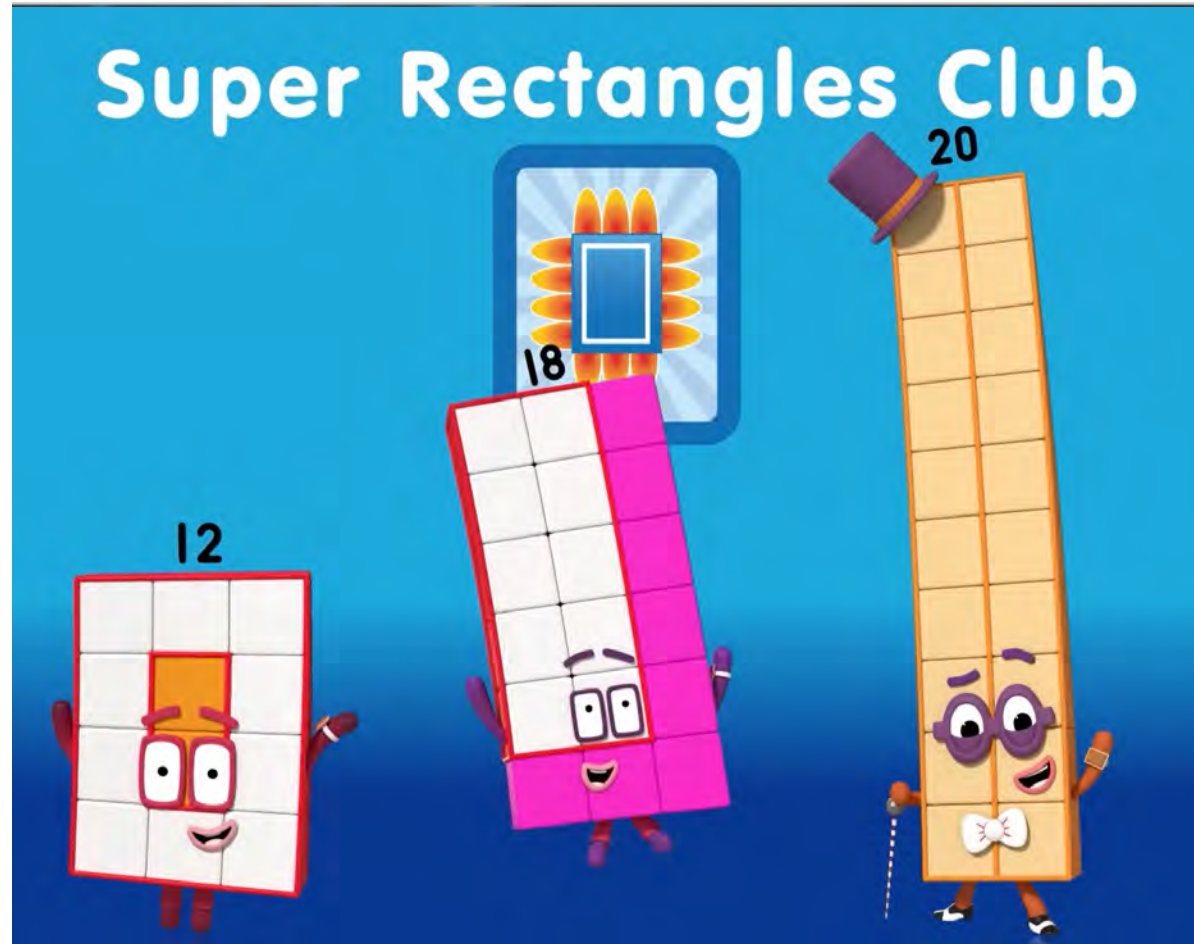
Is it normal for a computer to start sizzling when I tell it to print a PDF?

SITE-PLAN REVIEW!



4/20/2026

AESTHETICS:



- Data center buildings are giant rectangles, set backs are measured in football fields, and their “aesthetics” are largely security-driven.
- When their design and location all signal “not to be looked at”, regulating them on aesthetics doesn’t seem to serve the public trust very well.
- Focus on mitigation measures that improve aesthetics as a side effect, like landscaping or sound barriers.



TO ILLUSTRATE THE POINT ON AESTHETICS:

Everyone in this webinar has already reviewed the architectural elevations for the most recent Microsoft Data Centers

I've shown them in this slide deck several times already

Did you catch them?



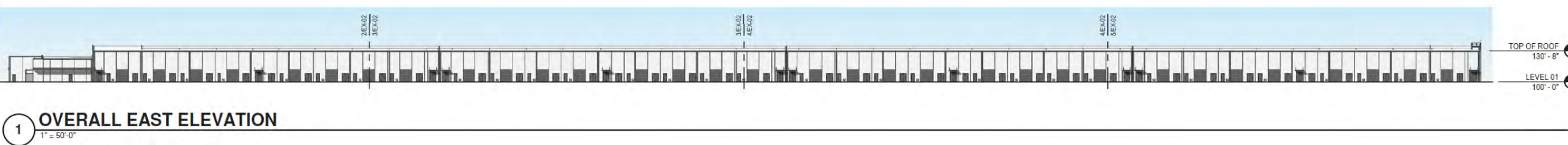


HOW ABOUT NOW?

Hint: They're all around you!



HOW ABOUT... NOW??



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LANDSCAPING/ SCREENING

- Can be a huge help, but codes are often too prescriptive and not strict enough all at once
- A multi height, dense layer of evergreen vegetation needs to be 100 ft wide for a reduction in 5db



LIGHTING

- The LED revolution has led to the price per lumen falls by a factor of 10 every decades and the power will increase by a factor of 20.
- Lesson: Lighting is so ridiculously cheap every development, especially those who value security, goes overboard.
- Pass a dark sky ordinance

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Five Lighting Principles for Responsible Outdoor Lighting



Responsible outdoor lighting is

1 Useful

Use light only if it is needed

All light should have a clear purpose. Consider how the use of light will impact the area, including wildlife and their habitats.



2 Targeted

Direct light so it falls only where it is needed

Use shielding and careful aiming to target the direction of the light beam so that it points downward and does not spill beyond where it is needed.



3 Low Level

Light should be no brighter than necessary

Use the lowest light level required. Be mindful of surface conditions, as some surfaces may reflect more light into the night sky than intended.



4 Controlled

Use light only when it is needed

Use controls such as timers or motion detectors to ensure that light is available when it is needed, dimmed when possible, and turned off when not needed.



5 Warm-colored

Use warmer color lights where possible

Limit the amount of shorter wavelength (blue-violet) light to the least amount needed.



Rev. 08-2023



PARKING

- Worst= Any square footage based regulation.
- Bad= Any employee based regulation
- Ok, but still bad- Some discretionary special exception process to the above
- Better= No regulation
- Best= Tie impervious surface parking to landscape and stormwater requirements!

Uses	Spaces Required <i>Square Feet Is Gross Unless Otherwise Specified</i>
Theater, movie	0.50 per seat
Industrial:	
Light industry, manufacturing and fabrication, plumbing, air conditioning and heating equipment (sales, service, warehousing)	2.0 per 1,000 sq. ft. office/customer use plus 1.0 per 750 sq. ft. per vehicle used/stored
Warehouse and wholesale	2.0 per 3 employees on maximum shift plus 1.0 per vehicle used/stored but no less than 1/2,000 sq. ft.

$$\begin{array}{r}
 5,218,164 \text{ SQ FT} \\
 \div \\
 2,000 \text{ SQ FT} \\
 = \\
 2,609 \text{ PARKING} \\
 \text{SPACES}
 \end{array}$$

ROUGHLY 28 ACRES
OF PARKING LOT.



STORMWATER

- The gigantic stormwater ponds present an easy “Bonus W” for sustainable infrastructure... or Canadian Geese
- 64 acres of stormwater ponds in recent approval



PERFORMANCE STANDARDS: NOISE, ODOR, VIBRATION

With closed loop data centers, a low band frequency “hum” is indicative of chillers.

Make sure you have ordinances that address different octaves of sound differently and the equipment to measure them.

Data centers can also emit “heat plumes” that are monitored by airports.



22. TRAFFIC & ACCESSIBILITY

Connectivity vs Site Security

Construction Traffic





“Do you ever wish variances existed for all the other laws out there?”

Well, Judge, that speed limit is preventing the reasonable use of my automobile, hence why I can't drive 55.”

VARIANCES



4/20/2026

AVOIDING THE “PLANNING VIA EXCEPTION” DOOM SPIRAL

WHY VARIANCES SHOULD BE AVOIDED

- Big lawyers vs regular volunteer residents is not a fair fight
- Zoning Appeals boards are... generous on average, and don't always follow criteria strictly.
- Grant too many and it becomes simply another committee step
- Runs with the land
- No harm reduction measures can be implemented.

HOW VARIANCES CAN BE AVOIDED

- Build flexibility into the code-
Alternative compliance
- Administrative adjustments: staff approved “mini variances” with very narrow parameters (10-15%)
- Employ a ZLM “Zoning Learning Model” where repeat variances trigger ordinance reviews.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE APPROVALS?

- Post-approval monitoring matters
- sound complaints
- construction complaints
- generator testing
- water/sewer use
- outside-agency reports
- triggers for re-review if equipment or operations materially change
- decommissioning and financial guarantees



BUSINESS —
SPONSORSHIP





WORD TO THE WISE, 1: CAVEAT

High value growth does not always equal easy fiscal capacity





WORD TO THE WISE, 2: EXPECTATIONS

Tax base alone is no longer enough.



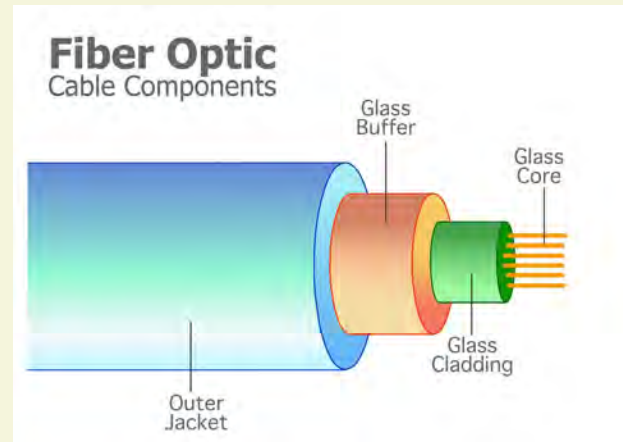
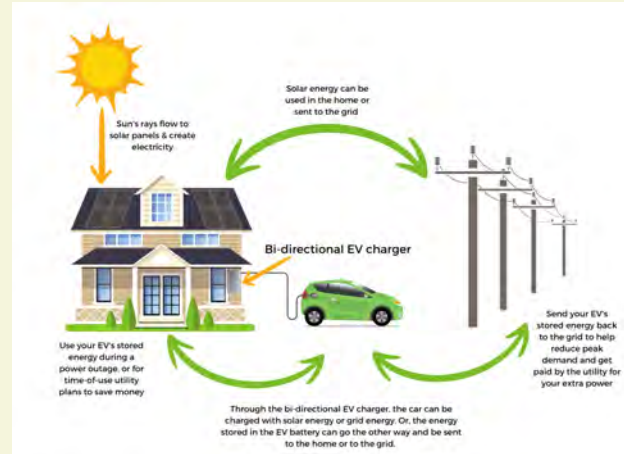
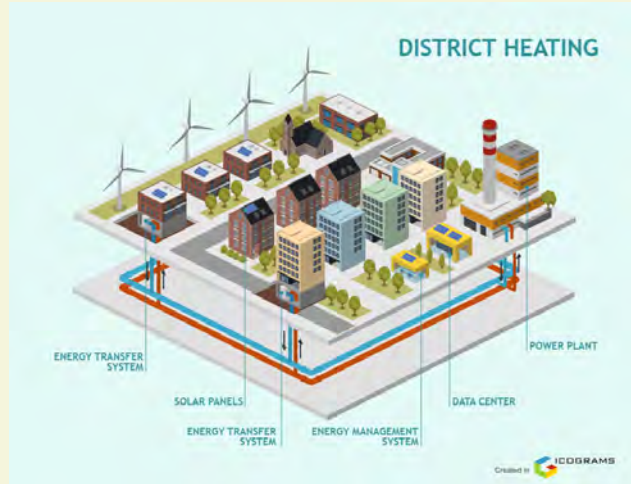


WORD TO THE WISE, 3: NEGOTIATE

Better outcomes are not automatic your community and leaders have to ask for them



“NICE TO HAVES”





CONCLUSION A PLANNER CHECKLIST:

- Is a proposal likely here?
- What can we prepare before a proposal arrives?
- What can we regulate directly?
- What can we only influence or coordinate?
- What belongs in zoning?
- What belongs in the Dev Agreement?
- Where is *the* public approval where the community gets to influence an up or down decision on the project?
- What decisions still have to go through public approval, especially after that? Can that be altered?
- What do we monitor after approval?
- What visible wins will residents actually see?





THANK YOU!

Questions?



4/20/2026