MONROE TOWNSHIP
CUMBERLAND COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-03

AN ORDINANCE OF MONROE TOWNSHIP, CUMBERLAND COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, AMENDING SECTIONS 305(I), 3.06(B), 6.02(A) AND TABLE 3.01 OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE ADOPTED ON SEPTEMBER 12, 2024, REGARDING DATA CENTERS AS CONDITIONAL USES AND PERMITTED ACCESSORY USES FOR DATA CENTERS IN THE HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL ZONES

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of Monroe Township has determined that it is appropriate to amend the Township's Zoning Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of Monroe Township is empowered to enact and amend zoning provisions under the grant of powers by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Act 247, "The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code," July 31, 1968, as amended, hereinafter referred to as "MPC".; and

WHEREAS, this Ordinance is intended to guide future growth and development by regulating land uses within Monroe Township for the improvement of the health, safety, and general welfare of its citizens. It is therefore enacted and ordained by the Board of Supervisors of Monroe Township, Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, as follows:

Article I. Add New Definition to Section 6.02(A) as follows:

Data Center. A use involving a building/premise primarily occupied by computers and/or telecommunications and related equipment, including supporting equipment, where information is processed, transferred and/or stored. The following shall be permitted accessory uses to a Data Center:

a. Utilities, utility lines, electrical substations, energy generation facilities, pump stations, water towers, mechanical equipment and environmental controls (air conditioners or cooling towers, fire suppression, etc.), redundant/backup power supplies, redundant data communications connections, and high security when located on the same tract or assemblage of adjacent parcels developed as a unified development for a Data Center.

Article II. Add Subsection 10 to Section 3.05(I) as follows:

10. *Data Center*. A use involving a building/premise primarily occupied by computers and/or telecommunications and related equipment, including supporting equipment, where information is processed, transferred and/or stored. Data Centers under Industrial uses shall comply with the following regulations:

a. All multi-phase Data Center land developments shall be depicted on a Master Plan prepared and submitted pursuant to the Plan Processing Procedures specified in the Monroe Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. The Pre-Application Review requirements specified in Section 302 shall be required for a Data Center. In addition, all proposed public rights-of-way and easements identified on the Monroe Township Official Map shall be incorporated into the Master Plan.

b. *Lot Area Requirements:* Data Centers shall meet the minimum lot size required by the underlying zoning district.

c. *Minimum Setback Requirements:* The following minimum setback standards are required for all Data Centers. These requirements supersede the requirements of the underlying zoning district.

Yard	**Setback from nonresidential uses or districts**	**Setback from residential uses or districts**
Front	100 feet	300 feet
Side	60 feet	300 feet
Rear	100 feet	300 feet
	Interior Setbacks	
Building to Building	50 feet	

d. *Street Frontage:* The minimum street frontage shall be determined based on the requirements in the underlying zoning district.

e. *Lot Coverage:* The maximum lot coverage shall be determined based on the requirements in the underlying zoning district.

f. *Height Limitations:* The maximum building height shall be determined based on the requirements in the underlying zoning district.

g. *Screening:* All screening shall be in accordance with Section 4.13 of this Ordinance and the following requirements:

(1) Location and Screening of Mechanical Equipment: All ground level and roof top mechanical equipment shall meet the following

standards in addition to those required by Section 4.29 of this Ordinance:

(2) Mechanical equipment shall be fully screened on all sides. Such visually solid screen must be constructed with a design, materials, details, and treatment compatible with those used on the nearest principal facade of the building.

(3) Perforation for Ventilated Screening: Screening for mechanical equipment may incorporate perforated surfaces on screening walls as necessary to permit ventilation of mechanical equipment.

(4) Height of Screening of Principal and Accessory Structures: Vegetative screening shall be selected based on mature plant heights in relation to the height of the principal or accessory structure and separation distance to provide full screening of the use. A plan prepared by a Registered Landscape Architect shall be submitted with Conditional Use application.

(5) Composition of Screening: Vegetated earth berms with a minimum height of 5 feet shall be incorporated into the screening design.

(6) Truck loading and/or maneuvering areas and dock doors shall not face a residential use or district or a public street.

h. *Buffer Yard:* A buffer yard of 100 feet shall be required between parking areas and other accessory uses as measured to adjacent residential uses. Vegetative screening shall be placed in the buffer yard.

i. *Noise:* In addition to the standards of Section 4.17(A).2, Data Centers shall comply with the following regulations. Where a conflict exists between Section 4.17 and this section, the more stringent regulation shall apply.

(1) Noise generated by mechanical equipment at the property line shall not exceed the greater of 60 dBA or preexisting noise levels as determined by an ambient noise study conducted by the applicant.

(2) Maximum sound levels listed above do not apply to emergency alerts, emergency work to provide electricity, water, or other public utilities when public health or safety is involved, snow removal, or road repair.

(3) Mechanical equipment, whether on a roof top, on the ground level, or elsewhere on the exterior of the lot abutting a lot with an existing residential use or within a residential district, must be screened on all four (4) sides by an acoustical barrier. For purposes of this section, acoustical barrier is defined as an exterior solid or louvred wall

containing sound-proofing materials designed to absorb noise and protect neighboring properties from noise pollution.

(4) Generators, cooling fans, mechanical equipment, and other noise generating Data Center components shall be oriented to minimize noise levels on adjoining residential uses or districts.

j. *Lighting.* Shall comply with Section 4.17 of this Ordinance.

k. *Aesthetic Treatments:*

(1) All principal and accessory structures associated with a Data Center shall be arranged, designed, and constructed to be harmonious and compatible with the site and with the surrounding properties.

(2) Data Center campuses containing more than one building are encouraged to provide a variety in building size, massing, siting, and appearance by transitioning from smaller or lower buildings along street frontages to larger and taller structures on the interior of the site. Consideration of topography should be given to avoid placement of larger, taller, or more massive buildings in a prominent location on the property or along a public street.

(3) External building materials shall be of colors that are low-reflective, subtle, or earth tone. Fluorescent and metallic colors shall be prohibited on exterior walls.

l. *Energy:* Data Center applicants shall provide the following information demonstrating that adequate energy is available for the project:

(1) Interconnection agreement from the electric service provider indicating that capacity is available and the Data Center will be served.

(2) Total energy needed for the project, including on site generation and energy transmitted by the public utility.

(3) An assessment of projected impacts to utility service and rates for neighboring community, with proposed mitigation strategies if potential negative impacts are identified. The Developer shall implement the identified mitigation strategies to offset any rate increases directly attributable to the Data Center project.

(4) All electric lines serving the facility shall be placed underground.

m. *Water and Wastewater.*

(1) Data Centers shall connect to and utilize public water and wastewater systems. Applicants shall provide will serve letters from the applicable wastewater and water suppliers.

(2) Data Centers shall utilize air cooled or closed loop mechanical cooling equipment to minimize water usage demand.

(3) All Data Centers meeting the water usage thresholds listed below require approval of the Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC) prior to Township approval. Applicants must provide SRBC's approval letter and any accompanying permit documentation prior to township approval.

(a) Water withdrawals of 100,000 gallons per day or more over a 30-day average individually or in combination with other withdrawals.

(b) Consumptive water use (water used, but not returned to the Susquehanna River Basin) of 20,000 gallons per day or more over a 30- day average.

(4) A water supply study for projects that propose using private water supplies and/or do not meet the SRBC review threshold is required. The water supply study shall be prepared by a qualified hydrogeology professional and include the following:

(a) Proposed water source(s) and estimated supply levels.

(b) Justification that the project necessitates use of a private water supply and that other less-water intensive designs are not feasible.

(c) Estimated water demand for the facility, including peak and average daily use, and proposed water consumptive use volumes.

(d) Water conservation measures to be utilized.

(e) Proposed method of wastewater treatment and discharge.

(f) Studies that prove installation of private waters supplies will not endanger or adversely decrease the groundwater supplies to adjacent properties within one mile of the property.

(g) Evaluation of groundwater withdrawals in areas with karst geology.

(5) Projects proposing wastewater discharge to surface waters of the Commonwealth must provide documentation of Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection approval.

n. *Emergency Management and Response*

(1) Owners of the Data Center shall submit an Emergency Response Plan (ERP) that must be prepared by a qualified professional and reviewed by the township's Fire Chief. The plan shall include:

(a) The name, address and telephone number of a 24-hour local emergency contact;

(b) Include detailed procedures for fire suppression, containment, ventilation, and evacuation;

(c) An evaluation of the access roads and hydrant locations within the site to ensure suitable access for emergency equipment within the site;

(d) Specialized training needs to ensure that all first responders receive adequate training specific to the installed systems, including energy storage facilities; and

(e) Provisions for annual fire safety inspections demonstrating compliance with fire safety standards to be performed by a qualified professional on behalf of the Data Center.

(2) A note shall be added to the land development plan that states, "Monroe Township shall not assume liability for the adequacy of the ERP and reserves the right to require additional documentation or certifications to confirm compliance with national standards."

Article III. Update to Table 3.01, Permissible Uses.

Table 3.01, Permissible Uses shall be updated to include "Data Center" as a Conditional Use in the "Industrial" (I) and "Highway Commercial" (HC) zoning districts.

Article IV. Add Subsection 23 to Section 3.06(A) as follows:

23. Accessories to Data Centers. On lots where Data Centers have been permitted as Conditional Uses, the following supplemental Use regulations apply:

a. Utilities serving the Data Center.

b. Utility lines serving the Data Center.

c. Electrical substations serving the Data Center.

d. Energy generation facilities serving the Data Center.

e. Pump stations serving the Data Center.

f. Water towers, mechanical equipment and environmental controls (air conditioners or cooling towers, fire suppression, etc.) serving the Data Center.

g. Redundant/backup power supplies serving the Data Center.

h. Redundant data communications connections Serving the Data Center.

i. High security when located on the same tract or assemblage of adjacent parcels developed as a unified development for a Data Center including, but not limited to, perimeter security fencing, monitored security cameras covering the perimeter security fencing and exterior property, and licensed security guards.

Article V. Effective Date.

This Ordinance shall be effective immediately upon enactment.

Article VI. Relationship to Other Ordinances

All other Ordinances, parts of Ordinances or parts of Resolutions inconsistent herewith shall be and the same expressly are repealed.

ENACTED AND ORDAINED this 15 day of December, 2025.

ATTEST:

Karen M Young

MONROE TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Philip Kehoe, Chairman

Timothy Thompson

Wilbur E. Wolf III

CERTIFICATE

I, the undersigned, Secretary of the Township of Monroe, Cumberland County, Pennsylvania (the "Township"), certify that: the foregoing is a true and correct copy of an Ordinance of the Board of Supervisors of the Township (the "Board"), which duly was enacted by affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Board at a meeting held on December 15, 2025; said Ordinance duly has been recorded in the Ordinance Book of the Township; said Ordinance duly has been published as required by law; and said Ordinance remains in effect, unaltered and unamended, as of the date of this Certificate.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I set my hand and affix the official seal of the Township, this 15 day of December 15, 2025.

Karen M Lowery

Karen Lowery, Secretary