

Fact Sheet: Why PWC Needs a Framework for Data Center Proffers Now

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1. PWC adopted climate mitigation and climate resilience goals, including a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2030 and attaining 100% use of renewable energy by 2035.
2. Data centers are, by far, the biggest source of new carbon emissions and electricity demand in PWC. Rapid growth in this sector is putting us on track to badly miss our county GHG goals, and could play a significant role in the MWCOG region missing its regional goals.
3. The county has maximum leverage to mitigate data center impacts while applications are in the permitting process, when the applicants can propose proffers. We understand that proffers are voluntary, and that local jurisdictions can't impose them, but through the proffer process, many of these mitigations can be achieved if it is made clear to the industry that they are expected. The same proffers can be used more prescriptively as conditions for Special Use Permits (SUPs).
4. Existing proffers from data centers are not achieving meaningful GHG emission reductions or otherwise mitigating the impacts of data centers. For example:
 - a. In the PW Digital Gateway, the applicants proffered a commitment that 10 percent of their energy use would be clean energy, when about 40 percent of Virginia's grid is already clean energy.
 - b. In the list of sustainability measures that applicants have submitted as proffers, many have proposed universal industry practice measures such as LED light bulbs. While helpful, this has little effect on overall GHG emissions.
5. There are over a dozen new data center projects in the pipeline, so there is an immediate need for an effective policy on proffers.
6. We continue to see the need for a uniform effective mitigation approach to proffers for data centers across the county government. This includes Planning staff, Environmental Management staff, the Planning Commission, the Board of County Supervisors, the Economic Development staff, etc.
7. To address the situation outlined above, in June 2025 the Sustainability Commission published an initial list of [recommended proffers for data center applications](#). The Commission is updating the list to reflect recent state legislation and new technical developments.
8. Unfortunately, we haven't seen the widespread adoption of proffer priorities that would provide significant mitigation of data center impacts. We urge PWC decisionmakers to address this critical need by taking a systematic and effective approach to mitigating impacts from data centers as part of the land-use process.