RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

Environmental Commission

Recommendation 20261118-004: COSMOS Data Center 6801 River Place Boulevard

WHEREAS, SE Cosmos, LLC and affiliate of SB Energy, is converting the approximately 156-acre former 3M campus at 6801 River Place Boulevard into a data center computing facility with about 50 MW of critical IT load and about 70 MW of total power; and

WHEREAS, the site is governed by the 1984 Planned Development Area ordinance (No. 841115-GG), which sets performance standards for noise, vibration, glare, toxic and noxious matter, and smoke, and by the 1986 research and development zoning ordinance (No. 860619-Q), and lies along RM 2222, a Hill Country Roadway; and

WHEREAS, the site abuts Balcones Canyonlands Preserve land managed under the 1996 Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan, which protects the endangered golden-cheeked warbler, black-capped vireo, and karst species, and the Preserve's management plan identifies light and noise pollution from urban development as harmful to warbler populations; and

WHEREAS, the Environmental Commission passed Recommendation 20260401-004 on April 1, 2026 advising Council and the City Manager on policies the City should adopt to support the Data Center industry; and

WHEREAS, Council adopted Resolution 20260827-061 on August 27, 2026 directing the City Manager to explore and recommend policies to regulate data centers and report to

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Council prior to the approval of any potential data center project requests for electricity that exceed 20 megawatts (MW) or water that exceed 85 million gallons per year; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Environmental Commission recommends the Council adopt the following:

- The City shall update the existing Environmental Assessment Study that includes water quality, soil quality, baseline assessment of the state of the existing ecology on the site with surveillance, cataloging and mapping of all critical environmental features with an emphasis on karst features that may be susceptible to excessive vibrations per the Environmental Criteria Manual.
- Maintain consistency with Council Resolution 20240215-024 and 20250424-055. and Resolution considered during the April 24, 2025, Council meeting.
- Prohibit the use of potable water for cooling operations.
- Require the use of a closed-loop, air cooled operation for cooling purposes.
- Adopt Dark Skies and Bird Friendly design features to protect wildlife.
- Adhere to Article 11 (Hill Country Roadway Requirements) of the City Code.
- Require adherence to City Codes Chapter 6-2, 25-8-520 and 30-5 regarding the
- environment and storage of hazardous materials
- Direct the City Manager to prepare a quarterly memorandum for public review via Council and the Environmental Commission assessing the total water and energy demands associated with this facility.
- Direct the City Manager to prepare a quarterly memorandum for public review via Council and the Environmental Commission assessing the air quality. Quarterly reports shall be made to Council and the Environmental Commission.
- Cap the energy use of the facility at 50MW of IT load and 70 MW of total power unless a public hearing is held to request an increase in power consumption.
- Direct the City Manager to establish 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year noise and vibration monitoring system within one mile of the facility with stations specifically located at River Place Elementary School, Four Points Middle

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School, and Vandergrift High School. Quarterly reports shall be made to Council and the Environmental Commission.

- Direct the City Manager to oppose air quality permits submitted to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) for backup generators and new uses related to the facility.
- Direct the City Manager to develop an enforcement plan to specifically address the performance standards outlined in Ordinances 841115-GG and 850221-K.
- Require the facility to curtail operations during periods of electrical emergency as declared by the Governor of the State of Texas, Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT), and/or Local Authorities.
- Require the facility to implement a Firewise Strategy for the property.
- Direct the City Manager to provide additional training and equipment to all Austin Fire personnel at stations that are most likely to respond to fires at this facility. This includes but is not limited to Stations 39 and 31 to address lithium-ion battery fires, diesel fuel and other hazardous materials spills that might enter the Bull Creek watershed.
- Strictly enforce City Code 25-2-1063 and 9-2 with regard to sound and light.

Date of Approval:

Motioned By: Seconded By:

Vote:

For:

Against:

Abstain:

Off the dais:

Absent:

Attest: _____

Mariana Krueger, Chair

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