INDEPENDENT CASE STUDY

Goochland County, Virginia

A Data Center Case Study

The Overlay and the Lawsuit

Goochland

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Disclosure: The author serves on the advisory board of an Alfred P. Sloan Foundation-funded study at Emory University on data centers and the Southern energy buildout. The study had no role in this case study.

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ABSTRACT

Hanover, documented in a companion study, decided its data center campuses one rezoning at a time. Goochland County tried something different. On November 6, 2025, after a public hearing at Goochland High School that ran past midnight, the Board of Supervisors voted 4-1 to adopt a Technology Overlay District and a companion Technology Zone: an overlay of roughly 4,400 acres for data centers and related uses along Route 288 from Interstate 64 to Patterson Avenue, about 3,500 of them in West Creek Business Park, where, on the county's account, data centers had been allowed by right since a 1987 rezoning, with by-right approval in most of the district, financial incentives layered on top, and a use table that includes small modular nuclear reactors by conditional use permit. No one who spoke in the public comment period supported it, by Richmond BizSense's account. Twenty-eight days later, four residents sued, alleging the county adopted the ordinance on defective notice and changed it materially the night of the vote. The county has budgeted $250,000 to defend it. On May 26, 2026, the circuit court rejected the county's attempt to file all 8,500 pages of its adoption record and ordered a pared-down set; the demurrer was argued on October 20, 2026, at a hearing that opened with the plaintiffs dropping all of their remaining counts except the first three. The dropped counts include the one that treated the night-of change as an unlawful downzoning; the three that remain allege violations of advertisement, notice and public hearing requirements, a lack of uniformity among the TOD regulations, and a violation of the county zoning ordinance. No ruling had been reported as of November 9, 2026. While the case is pending, the corridor is moving. On June 10, 2026, Tract, the developer Hanover rejected two weeks earlier, filed the district's first pre-application, for a data center campus its June concept plans showed as twelve buildings on roughly 900 acres; its formal conditional use permit application followed on August 5, 2026. In February 2026 New Kent County presented a draft overlay of its own, which Richmond BizSense framed as following Goochland's lead; on July 13, 2026, New Kent's board directed that the draft not proceed in its current form (Part Ten).

This case study treats the overlay itself as the protagonist: an institutional instrument with a design history, an adoption story, and a legal test. The legal test is the part that matters most for the series. The plaintiffs do not argue that data centers are bad. They argue the county broke the rules adopting the district and that its regulations violate the state's uniformity requirement and the county's own zoning ordinance, and the question their suit poses is whether pre-entitlement by ordinance moves faster than the democratic and judicial checks built to answer it. The study adds a fifth position to the series' institutional spectrum. Henrico reformed after entitling. Hanover refused case by case. Chesterfield contracted its

leverage away. Prince William’s governance was captured, then corrected. Goochland wrote by-right data center use into a district-wide ordinance, over land most of which its 1987 zoning had already opened to data centers, and is being tested in court on the legality of its adoption and its text.

PURPOSE, SCOPE, AND METHOD

This case study documents the conception, adoption, legal challenge, and early operation of Goochland County's Technology Overlay District and Technology Zone, from the county's economic development planning in 2024 through June 12, 2026, the snapshot date to which "this snapshot" refers in the text, with later items dated in the text through November 9, 2026. The central litigation is active, and the study's claims about it are dated for that reason.

The primary intended readers are researchers working on data center growth and its consequences for governance, land, water, and power. This document organizes its readings in five frameworks of the author's own, by type of work: institutional behavior, distributional justice, utility finance, energy and labor infrastructure, and energy geography.[1] The Goochland record offers four of these frameworks something the project-by-project cases cannot: the institutional behavior framework gets a county that set its data center terms by ordinance, district-wide, rather than case by case; the distributional justice framework gets an opposition that is partly extraterritorial, people who cannot vote for the board that decided; the utility finance framework gets a pricing regime set before any facility operates, against a regional repricing wave moving the other way; and the energy geography framework gets an ordinance form that several Virginia counties have now used. These connections are flagged inline and consolidated in Part Twelve.

The second audience is Virginia localities weighing overlays of their own, as New Kent did in 2026. The third is citizens and journalists seeking to understand what a technology overlay district is, what it permits, and what challenging one requires.

A note on method. This study is built entirely from public sources: the adopted ordinances and county documents, circuit court coverage, state code and case law, census and budget data, and sustained local news coverage, principally Richmond BizSense, VPM News, WTVR, WRIC, NBC12, the Virginia Mercury, Virginia Business, Cardinal News, and the Goochland-focused civic blog Goochland on my mind. Direct quotations are reproduced as reported in the cited coverage. No interviews were conducted. The county posts the complaint only as a non-searchable scan; its counts are reported here from the county's Responsive Pleading and the plaintiffs' Brief in Opposition, both posted by the county with searchable text, and from news accounts. Selected claims that rest on a single secondary source are marked with an asterisk, and Part Thirteen lists the primary records that would confirm them. A standing discipline governs the litigation sections: the case is pending, the plaintiffs' allegations are allegations, the county's defenses are defenses, and the May 26 ruling is a ruling about the record, not the merits. Both

sides’ positions are stated in their own terms. The companion report, What Virginia Is Spending, What Virginia Is Getting (v5.5), covers the statewide fiscal picture.[2]

PART ONE: THE COUNTY AND THE CORRIDOR

Goochland County runs west from the Henrico County line along the north bank of the James River, about 290 square miles of rolling horse-and-hay country with a courthouse village at its center. The Weldon Cooper Center estimates its July 1, 2025 population at 28,432, up from 24,727 at the 2020 Census.[3] The real estate tax rate is $0.53 per $100; the FY2027 budget, proposed at roughly $171 million all funds, was adopted on May 5, 2026 with no tax rate increases.[4] It is a small government. The county attorney's office told the board in February 2026 that it lacked the staff to handle all elements of defending a major lawsuit, and the FY2026 budget's headline personnel investment was thirteen new positions countywide.[5][6]

The eastern end is different country. West Creek Business Park, roughly 3,500 acres south of I-64 along the Route 288 corridor, has carried industrial zoning since a 1987 rezoning, under which, on the county's account, data centers could locate by right with minimal buffers, decades before anyone wanted them.[7][8] Its tenants are the county's fiscal anchors: Capital One, CarMax, Performance Food Group. In September 2025, Eli Lilly announced a $5 billion pharmaceutical manufacturing facility on a 227-acre Markel-owned site on West Creek Parkway, 650 permanent jobs.[9] Around the park's western edge, the growth machine meets subdivisions: Readers Branch, a 300-plus home community bordering an industrially zoned West Creek parcel; Mosaic at West Creek, a 55-and-over community; the Richmond Country Club. East across Route 288 sits Henrico's Short Pump, close enough that Goochland's land-use choices land in another county's living rooms.

Water and sewer in this corridor run through the Tuckahoe Creek Service District, created in 2002 and funded by a $0.32 ad valorem surtax on real estate within the district. The county's water comes from Henrico under a contract currently providing 5.25 million gallons per day, with ultimate contractual capacity of 25 MGD; wastewater agreements run to Henrico and Richmond.[10] The geography of the arrangement matters: the infrastructure that would supply any data center buildout in the corridor is purchased from the county whose residents showed up to oppose that buildout.

The fiscal motive behind everything that follows is stated plainly in the county's own materials. The board named economic development among its priorities at a January 2024 special meeting, and Tom Winfree, the board's 2025 chair, has described the goal as a 70/30 split between residential and business revenue.[11][12] Winfree put the logic on the record the night of the adoption vote: "Increasing revenue from commercial sources allows us to meet the future needs of our community without the need to balance the budget on the backs of the homeowners."[12] Goochland had already placed its bet on the data center sector specifically. In April 2019 the

county created a separate business personal property classification for data center equipment at $0.40 per $100, against $3.75 for ordinary business equipment, “to promote further investment in this market sector.”[13] The rate, now $0.44, was the quiet predicate. The overlay was the loud one.

PART TWO: THE INSTRUMENT AND LOUISA'S DISTRICT

The overlay district for data centers was not new to Virginia when Louisa used it. Prince William County adopted a Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District on May 17, 2016 (Ord. No. 16-21), under which "Data centers shall be permitted by right" in the district's office and industrial zones.[14] In April 2023, Louisa County, one county to the northwest of Goochland, adopted Ordinance 2023-6 by a 6-1 vote, creating a Technology Overlay District codified at County Code §§ 86-330 through 86-334, with a noise ceiling of 65 dB by day and 60 dB at night.[14][15]

Louisa's design has these parts: an overlay the board can lay over any underlying zoning by ordinance and map amendment, minimum contiguous acreage (125 acres in Louisa), required proximity to 115kV-or-greater transmission, design and buffer standards (200 feet from residential, 300 from agricultural in Louisa's current text), a noise ceiling, and a cap on total district size of one percent of county land.[14] The original 2023 ordinance made data centers a by-right use inside the overlay. The sequence that followed is the part Goochland should have studied hardest. On August 30, 2023, 149 days after adoption, Louisa announced an $11 billion, two-campus Amazon Web Services deal inside the district.[16][17] In August 2024 the county retrofitted a conditional use permit requirement onto the district's principal uses (Ordinance 2024-11), and in 2024 it shrank the district's footprint.[14][18] By 2025-2026 the county was fighting over the instrument itself: AWS withdrew a third-campus CUP under neighbor resistance in July 2025, bought roughly 1,925 acres including the same tract for $72.45 million in January 2026, and a unanimous board vote of January 20, 2026 directing the planning commission to consider pulling some 2,600 acres back out of the district stalled when the commission pulled its hearing on February 12 and again on April 9, 2026; no further action on the removal appears in the Louisa board and planning commission records posted as of November 9, 2026.[19][18][17]

Louisa's arc, by-right invitation, anchor commitment, retrofit of discretion, rollback fight, is one full life cycle of the form observed in one county. Goochland adopted its own overlay at the third stage of Louisa's cycle and chose the design Louisa had since abandoned: data centers by right across most of its district. Goochland's district also carries a financial instrument that Louisa's overlay ordinance does not include (the Technology Zone incentives of Part Three) and a small modular reactor use category (Part Three), and its adoption fight arrived before any anchor tenant. What the two counties share is a type of ordinance. Goochland's July 2025 draft carried the same noise caps as Louisa's code, 65 dB by day and 60 at night; the adopted ordinance replaced them with 55 dBA and 65 dBC. The county's TOD planning documents searched for this study cite "Benchmarks with other

jurisdictions” and do not name Louisa, and no record read for this study shows Goochland drafting from Louisa’s text.[8]

PART THREE: WHAT THE TOD PERMITS AND THE TZ PAYS

The District

The adopted Technology Overlay District spans about five miles of the Route 288 corridor from I-64 south to Patterson Avenue: roughly 4,400 acres total, about 3,500 of them inside West Creek Business Park (controlled by Pruitt Associates), plus a roughly 900-acre western sub-area along Hockett Road, designated TOD West, owned in parts by members of the Haddock, Stern, and Arenstein families.*[20][12] The ordinance package consists of a comprehensive plan amendment (CP-2025-00002) and a zoning ordinance amendment (ZOA-2025-00001) adding Article 27.A, Sections 15-448 through 15-450, to the county code, with siting criteria requiring at least 100 contiguous acres and proximity to 115kV-or-greater transmission.[21] The parallel Technology Zone ordinance (No. 6453) amends Chapter 8, adding Sections 8-100 through 8-106 under the authority of Virginia Code § 58.1-3850.[22]

The Use Table

Inside the overlay, data centers are a by-right use, processed administratively through a conceptual master plan and plan of development, with no public hearing per project. The exception is TOD West, where data centers require a conditional use permit. Because West Creek's 1987 zoning already allowed data centers by right, on the county's account, the sources read for this case study do not size how much land the overlay newly opened to by-right data centers; the adopted ordinance and map are the record (Part Thirteen). Also by right: technology R&D, advanced manufacturing, technology schools and training centers, transmission substations, and energy storage meeting distance and chemistry conditions. Utility generating stations, defined to include natural gas peaking plants and small modular nuclear reactor facilities under 300 megawatts electric, require a conditional use permit anywhere in the district.[21] A September 2025 Cardinal News column reported that April Wade of the Virginia Nuclear Energy Consortium knew of no other Virginia locality with a zoning ordinance specifically aimed at allowing SMRs, noted that Surry County allows them by special permit, and framed Goochland as a test of public acceptance for the technology.[23] Part Six runs that thread to ground; the short version is that the reactor exists in the use table and nowhere else.

Two county-initiated amendments would change this table; as of November 9, 2026, neither had been adopted. On August 24, 2026, the county filed two pre-applications of its own. The first would prohibit data centers outside the Technology Overlay District: "Data centers would be prohibited everywhere else in Goochland." The second would align the ordinance with Va. Code § 15.2-2209.5, effective July 1, 2026,

which the county describes as requiring a noise impact study “before a facility drawing 100 megawatts of power or more can be approved,” and would have the board “re-adopt the TOD ordinance uses and standards.” The board voted on Tuesday, September 1, 2026, to refer the proposed prohibition to the Planning Commission; WTVR, which reported no tally, noted that the vote was not final approval. On October 6, 2026, the board extended the commission’s time, and the commission “now has until January 22, 2027, to consider and provide a recommendation on the proposals.” On October 27, 2026, the county posted a community meeting on the draft amendments for November 10, 2026, at Goochland High School; no Planning Commission or Board hearing date was posted as of November 9, 2026. The county’s page states: “Nothing is decided yet.”[24]

The Data Center Standards

The standards in Section 15-449 are the county’s answer to the question every opponent asked: what protects the people already there. Data centers on industrial base zoning must sit at least 300 feet from residentially zoned property, with a 250-foot vegetated buffer where adjacent to non-industrial property; on agricultural base zoning the setback is 500 feet, reducible to 300 by CUP. For conceptual master plans adjacent to residentially zoned property or to mixed-use development with residential uses, noise is capped at 55 dBA and 65 dBC measured at the shared property line, with a third-party noise study required at plan of development, again within three months of operations, and on demand up to four times a year. On those plans, generator operation is prohibited except for testing (two hours a day, weekdays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., on a published schedule) and defined emergencies; generators must be Tier 4 certified low-emission diesel, shielded by a principal building, enclosed, walled, and screened by berms installed before any structures rise. Height is capped at 120 feet, with an 80-foot ceiling adjacent to residential or agricultural property and step-back and sprinkler requirements above 60 feet. Public water and sewer are mandatory. Construction near residential is limited to weekdays, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.[21]

The county’s framing of these standards is the strongest version of its case for the whole enterprise: “Prior to the adoption of the TOD, data centers could have located as close as 50-feet to residentially zoned property with very limited buffers and no sound protections. Under the adopted TOD, data centers are now required to be located a minimum of 300-feet with sound, visual, and height protections.”[8] The claim is true as far as it goes. West Creek’s 1987 zoning, on the county’s own account, did allow by-right data centers with minimal buffers, as close as 50 feet to residentially zoned property such as Readers Branch.[8] The opponents’ counter, developed across Parts Four and Five, is that the county adopted the package in a way that is now in front of a judge.

How the Standards Table Regionally

Jurisdiction / instrument	Setback from residential	Noise at property line	Generator standard	Approval posture
Goochland TOD (Nov. 2025)	300 ft (500 ft on agric. base)	55 dBA / 65 dBC	Tier 4 diesel, enclosed, bermed, tested 2 hrs/day max (plans adjacent to residential)	By right (CUP in TOD West)
Louisa TOD §§ 86-330-334 (as amended Aug. 2024)	200 ft buffer (300 ft agric.)	65 dB day / 60 dB night (no weighting stated)	Not specified in district standards	CUP (retrofitted Aug. 2024)
Hanover, Mountain Road proffers (final, May 21, 2026)	300 ft	57 dBA day / 50 dBA night; 73/68 dBC (proffered, not ordinance)	Tier IV, testing 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays	Case by case; rejected 4-3, May 27, 2026
Chesterfield ZOMod, Sec. 19.2-32 (eff. Jan. 2026)	200 ft from residential or agric. property	60 dBA	Testing 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays	CUP required
Prince William, Sustainability Commission draft recommendations (Mar. 2025)	1,320 ft	Not specified in the draft as tabled	DEQ Tier 4	Draft; the amendment adopted Sept. 22, 2026 keeps by right inside the closed overlay, SUP outside
Loudoun ZOAM-2024-0001 (Mar. 2025)	500 ft	Phase 2 pending at Mar. 2025	Not tabled	SPEX required

Sources: adopted Goochland TOD ordinance; Louisa County Code § 86-332; companion Chesterfield, Hanover and Prince William studies, with the Loudoun row as tabled in the companion Hanover study.[21][14][25][26]

Read down the table and Goochland's standards sit in the middle: tighter than Louisa's noise ceiling and than Chesterfield's ZOMod on both noise and setback, looser than the 500 feet in Loudoun's amendment and the 1,320 feet in Prince William's draft recommendations. Read across the last column and Goochland's posture is shared, among these rows, only by Prince William's overlay as amended on September 22, 2026, which keeps by-right development for eligible properties

inside a district closed to expansion. Every other jurisdiction in the table attaches its standards to a discretionary act it can still refuse. Goochland attached its standards to a by-right entitlement, most of which, on the county's account, West Creek's 1987 zoning had granted before the overlay existed.

The Technology Zone

The Technology Zone is the overlay's checkbook. For up to ten years, a "qualified technology business" can receive reimbursement of up to 75 percent of building permit fees and up to 100 percent of utility connection fees, paid after investment and job thresholds are verified, with amounts scaled to estimated economic impact. The board may add discretionary incentives by performance agreement. Qualification requires five full-time jobs and $500,000 of capital investment for a new business, two net new jobs and $100,000 for an existing one, with wages at twice the federal minimum.[22] These are fee reimbursements rather than tax abatements; the data center equipment rate of Part Seven is a separate, countywide classification, and the ordinance expressly leaves special service district taxes, the Tuckahoe Creek surtax among them, intact. For the distributional justice framework, the structure of the package matters: the incentives flow to firms meeting investment thresholds, the buffers and noise ceilings flow to adjacent residents, and the two groups are not the same people. Who lives along the corridor and who collects the reimbursements is an empirical question Part Twelve leaves open.

The TZ ordinance also contains the adoption story's first procedural footnote: its own public hearing was advertised for October 7, 2025, then deferred by board motion to November 6 "so that this ordinance could be heard in tandem with the Technology Overlay District ordinance."[22] The tandem hearing is why both instruments share a midnight birthday.

PART FOUR: THE ADOPTION

Four Months, Two Town Halls, a Midnight Hearing

The public arc ran 122 days. The county introduced the proposals at a community meeting on July 7, 2025.[8] By early August the reaction had forced a schedule change: County Administrator Jeremy Raley announced that the planning commission hearing set for August 21 would move to September “after hearing public outcry,” with opposition concentrated in Readers Branch, where the original draft would have allowed a data center under 80 feet within 50 feet of the subdivision’s edge.*[27] A second community meeting on September 8 drew around 700 people.*[28] The county also held two town halls, a District 5 town hall on September 22 and a countywide town hall on October 6, 2025, and a circuit of HOA meetings.[8]

The planning commission heard the case over two nights. On September 18, residents again spoke out “in the dozens” during public comment, and the commission voted 4-1 to continue to a second session; on September 25 it voted 3-2 to recommend approval.[21][29] Commissioners Jess McLaughlin, Dwain Cosby, and Curt Pituck voted yes; Amanda Kowalski and Guy Kemmerly voted no, with Kemmerly making the motion that attached four recommended conditions (CUP-only energy generation, a 500-foot setback from residential property for by-right data centers with a CUP required to locate closer, an 80-foot by-right height cap adjacent to residentially zoned property, and decibel limits below the proposed 65 by day and 60 at night) and then voting against the result.*[29] WRIC’s headline verb was “narrowly advances.”[30] BizSense’s account of the commission’s September 18 session supplied the adoption fight’s most quoted lines. A speaker for the Mosaic at West Creek HOA: “We cannot be half community and half an industrial park. We cannot be half a safe haven for families and half a sacrifice zone for economic development.” Another resident, reaching for the worst available analogy for the nuclear provision: “We will probably not be known as Chernobyl on the James, but please remember the choice we have.”*[28]

On October 20-21 the county posted revised ordinances incorporating the commission’s conditions: no by-right energy generation anywhere in the district, no by-right data centers in TOD West, noise lowered to 55 dBA with a new 65 dBC limit, a 500-foot setback (described in the county’s news release as applying to data centers on agricultural base zoning, where the commission’s condition had named residential property), the 80-foot adjacency cap, mandatory public water, no access through residential streets.[31] Those late-October postings defined the version the public was noticed to hear on November 6. What changed after them is the subject of the lawsuit.

The hearing itself began at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 6, 2025, in the Goochland High School auditorium, and the vote came just after midnight. Roughly 350 residents attended. More than 80 residents of Goochland and surrounding counties spoke in opposition, by the Virginia Mercury's count, over a comment period that BizSense timed at more than four hours.[12][32][33] No speaker during the comment period supported the ordinance, by BizSense's account. Resident Stephen Levet, who obtained the county's correspondence through a FOIA request, said he had read more than 1,000 emails and comments on the proposal, nearly all of them opposed.[34][35] Two Henrico supervisors crossed the county line to speak: Jody Rogish of Tuckahoe and Misty Roundtree of Three Chopt, whose districts abut the corridor. Roundtree's appeal to the board ran against type for an elected official addressing a neighboring jurisdiction: "This is a gift that every elected official would want to have... I implore you to not squander that gift."[35]

The Night-Of Changes

Two sets of changes entered the ordinance on the night of the vote. Staff presented amendments described in coverage as small wording changes plus a substantive clarification: where a data center is by-right under base zoning and the property adjoins residential, the TOD standards apply (adopted as Section 15-448.B(3)), along with a weekday limit on construction hours.[12][21] Supervisor Charlie Vaughters then moved floor amendments converting the generator sound-mitigation menu, which the October draft offered as options, into an all-of-the-above mandate for data centers adjacent to residential zoning: shielding by a principal building, enclosure, opaque sound-minimizing walls, berms installed before construction, and Tier 4 certified low-emission diesel units.[11][21][31]

Each change tightened the ordinance in residents' favor, which is the county's point. Each change also entered the text after the last published notice, which is the plaintiffs'. District 5 Supervisor Jonathan Lyle reacted in real time: "This is a lot, and please don't take this as criticism, but I would have liked to have seen this before tonight."[12]

The Vote and the Reasons

Lyle moved to defer the decision to the board's regular July 2026 meeting; the motion died without a second. (BizSense reports the deferral target as the board's regular July meeting; VPM quotes Lyle asking to "defer a vote til next year"; the Virginia Mercury characterized it as a one-year delay.) His subsequent amendment to remove TOD West from the district also died without a second. Vaughters moved approval, Neil Spoonhower seconded the TOD motion, Jonathan Christy is recorded as seconding the Technology Zone, and both ordinances passed 4-1.[12][11][22]

Supervisor	District	Vote	Stated position
Charlie Vaughters	4	Yes (moved both)	“With this (TOD), Goochland has a chance to set and follow a higher standard for development.”
Tom Winfree	3 (2025 chair)	Yes	The 70/30 revenue goal; commercial revenue avoids “balanc[ing] the budget on the backs of the homeowners”
Neil Spoonhower	2	Yes (seconded TOD)	Process defense: “If this is back-dooring, it is the worst job of back-dooring a project that I have ever seen”
Jonathan Christy	1 (2026 chair; seconded TZ)	Yes	Individual reasoning not quoted in available coverage; meeting recording is the source
Jonathan Lyle	5	No	“My belief is that we are all working towards the same end, but I’m of the opinion that we could have improved what we’re about to vote on.”

Sources: county news release and recorded vote block in Ordinance 6453; BizSense, VPM, WTVR, NBC12, Virginia Mercury coverage.[11][22][12][35][33][36][32]

Vaughters described the process as the hardest of his tenure and his own posture in it memorably: “I had to take the cotton out of my ears and put it in my mouth during this process — listen, learn and compromise.”[35] Lyle’s no was a process vote, not a substance vote; he has said the TOD “was seen as a tool, not the tool, but a tool, that would help us attract more industry,” and his stated objection was timing: “I think this could be better and I think time would have allowed us to do that.”[32][36] Two record notes: VPM’s photo captions mislabel Lyle as the District 2 supervisor (the article text has District 5 correctly), and the Virginia Mercury renders the chair’s name as “Tim Winfree”; the county’s roster has Thomas.[35][32][37] One more, with some bearing on a lawsuit about notice: the adopted TZ ordinance’s boilerplate recital locates the November 6 meeting “in the Goochland County Administration Building.” The county’s own hearing notice and the news accounts cited here place it at Goochland High School.[22][31]

The Contract in the Background

The adoption fight ran alongside an unresolved question about what, specifically, the district was for. During the fall, an email from Lyle surfaced through a resident FOIA request asserting that a contract existed between the TOD West landowners and an unnamed developer for an eight-building data center campus of roughly two million square feet, contingent on the land's inclusion in the district, and that other supervisors had received information he had not.*[38] The county's response, on its own FAQ page, confirmed the outline: it "has been made aware of discussions between a private developer and several landowners regarding a contract for a potential data center project on approximately 900+ acres near Mosaic and Richmond Country Club along Hockett Road (TOD West)," adding that it learned of the discussions after they occurred.[39] At the November 6 hearing Lyle pressed the implication: if no data center deal hinged on passage that evening, he was not sure why a deferral was unacceptable.[12] Spoonhower's "worst job of back-dooring" line was the rebuttal.

Seven months later, Tract filed its pre-application for a twelve-building campus on approximately 900 acres of Haddock, Stern, and Arenstein land in TOD West (Part Six). The county never confirmed that the rumored 2025 counterparty was Tract, and this study does not assert it.

The county has since published its own account of its dealings with Tract, on the project page it maintains for the application. It states that in November 2023 the Economic Development Authority and Tract entered into a nondisclosure agreement "concerning Tract's interest in developing a data center campus on property in West Creek," that "This agreement did not involve the Tuckahoe Technology Park site in the TOD West," and that discussions with the county's economic development staff "ceased in April 2024"; that in August 2025 the owners of TOD West "asked to have their property included in the TOD area"; that on November 17, 2025, "After the TOD was adopted, Tract contacted the County with inquiries regarding developing a portion of the TOD West property," after which the county, the EDA, and Tract "entered into a separate NDA concerning that property"; and that "As of June 17, 2026, Tract has released the County and the EDA from both agreements." The county has posted the agreements. The timeline is the county's statement, published while the lawsuit is pending, and it does not identify the developer described in the fall 2025 email.[40]

PART FIVE: THE LAWSUIT

The Complaint

On December 4, 2025, twenty-eight days after the November 6 date the ordinances bear (the vote itself came just after midnight) and inside the 30-day window Virginia Code § 15.2-2204(E) allows for advertisement-based challenges, four Goochland property owners sued the county, the Board of Supervisors, and the Planning Commission in Goochland County Circuit Court: Cynthia Haas, Peggy Knisley, Virginia H. Reed, and Gail A. Minnick.[5][41] Haas lives in a community immediately adjacent to land where the district now permits data centers.*[42] Their counsel is Philip Strother of Strother Law Offices; Goochland resident John Gessner, whom BizSense describes as informal legal counsel to the plaintiffs, assists.*[43][20] The case is Haas v. Board of Supervisors of Goochland County, No. CL25-1270, per the caption of the county's Responsive Pleading; the county posts the complaint only as a scanned image, and posts the Responsive Pleading and the plaintiffs' Brief in Opposition with searchable text.[44]

The complaint as filed pleaded nine counts seeking, principally, a declaration that the TOD and the related comprehensive plan and zoning amendments are null and void, plus legal fees.*[45][5] The reported allegations group into three theories. First, defective advertisement: the required notice was "wholly inadequate" and "confusingly defective," and residents in and near the district were not properly notified, including a failure to properly identify affected properties.*[20][5] Second, substantive zoning defects: per the complaint as quoted by Virginia Business, "The TOD ordinance contains provisions authorizing certain uses without adequately objective standards, includes internal inconsistencies that fail to provide clear notice to landowners and administrators, and delegates broad discretion to county officials in the review and approval process."[5] Third, the night-of changes: the adopted version "differed materially" from the version described in the county's late-October published notices.*[20] Plaintiff Haas, describing the November 6 floor amendments: "Residents were given no advanced notice. Residents spoke at the November 6 meeting and said, 'You guys can't pass this tonight.'" She added: "You just added four additional things," and "It didn't matter to the county."[20] The county's Responsive Pleading describes Count II as alleging a violation of the uniformity requirement of Va. Code § 15.2-2282 and Count III as alleging that the TOD's adoption violated Zoning Ordinance § 15-4 and that the new TOD uses "are incompatible with the agricultural districts' intent and restrictions" in the A-1 and A-2 districts the TOD covers. It also describes counts beyond those three theories: a challenge to the county's authority to regulate generators under Dillon's Rule and state preemption (Count V), a challenge to the mandatory public water and sewer provision (Count VI), an allegation of unconstitutionally vague terms (Count VII),

and a request that any invalid provision take the whole ordinance with it (Count IX); it describes Count IV as casting the post-hearing change as an unlawful downzoning.[44]

In spring 2026 the plaintiffs voluntarily withdrew Count VIII, which had alleged the adoption was arbitrary and capricious. Strother described the withdrawal as strengthening the case; County Administrator Jeremy Raley said the withdrawal "speaks to the work that the board and staff did."[43] The strategic reading is worth recording: dropping the arbitrariness count abandons the deferential-review battlefield, where Virginia courts presume legislative validity. After the plaintiffs' October 20, 2026 nonsuit of further counts, the case rests on advertising and notice and on the ordinance's conformity with the uniformity requirement and the county zoning ordinance. The Court of Appeals' 2026 Digital Gateway opinion describes Glazebrook as having held void ab initio an ordinance whose advertisement did not meet the statute.[46][47]

The Legal Predicate

Virginia Code § 15.2-2204 lets a plan or ordinance be advertised by reference, but every such advertisement "shall identify the place or places within the locality where copies of the proposed plans, ordinances or amendments may be examined," and the notice must be published twice, "with the first notice appearing no more than 28 days before and the second notice appearing no less than five days before the date of the meeting referenced in the notice." For a map change involving more than 100 parcels, the advertisement may instead describe the boundaries and link a map. Written notice goes to the owner of each parcel involved and, where 25 or fewer parcels are involved, also to the owners of abutting property and property across the street.[41] The statute once required a "descriptive summary" of the proposed action; the 2023 amendments (2023 Va. Acts chs. 506, 507) removed that requirement and kept the requirement to say where the text may be examined, as the Court of Appeals of Virginia recorded in its March 31, 2026 Digital Gateway opinion.[47] Glazebrook v. Board of Supervisors of Spotsylvania County (2003) voided an ordinance whose advertisement lacked the descriptive summary then required, and the Court of Appeals reads it as having enforced subsection A's advertising requirements "without regard to whether the plaintiffs had actual notice of the hearing."[46][47] The statute contains defenses the county can be expected to invoke: a savings clause for inadvertent failure to give written notice, and a provision under which a party's actual notice of, or active participation in, the proceedings waives that party's challenge for failure to receive the written notice. In the same opinion the Court of Appeals held that this waiver "does not excuse advertising deficiencies under subsection A."[47] How the circuit court applies that

holding to the plaintiffs' published-notice and material-change theories is for the demurrer ruling, and this study does not predict it.

The plaintiffs' advertising theory draws on the Prince William Digital Gateway litigation, which the plaintiffs' July 2026 brief discusses, and in which a circuit judge voided that rezoning in August 2025 over advertising non-compliance; the case was on appeal at this snapshot; on July 2, 2026 the developer entities, GW Acquisition Co., LLC and GW Acquisition Co. I, LLC, withdrew their petition to the Supreme Court of Virginia, and the judgment took full effect. The companion Prince William study treats the case at length.*[5][48][44]

The Defense and the $250,000

The county's posture is confident. Its 66-page responsive pleading calls the adoption "a model of good government in action" and argues the plaintiffs "generally lack standing as they have failed to allege particularized harm"; a demurrer seeks dismissal outright.[20][5][44] At the February 3, 2026 board meeting, the board, with Supervisor Spoonhower absent, unanimously appropriated $250,000 for the county's defense (Resolution 6566), for outside counsel Gentry Locke of Roanoke (attorney Michael Finney), atop up to $100,000 in VACo liability coverage. County Attorney Tara McGee's explanation to the board doubles as a datum on small-county capacity: "We don't have the staffing in our office… to handle all elements of defensive litigation."[5] Winfree used the occasion to renew his vote: "I've never been convinced any more than I am today that we made the right decision in this case."[5] Plaintiff fundraising runs the other way: legal fees paid, per coverage, by donations from roughly 300 residents. Haas: "We've got a David and Goliath situation going on… Little David here is doing everything based on donations."[42][20]

The May 26 Ruling

On Tuesday, May 26, 2026, Judge Timothy K. Sanner heard pretrial motions on what the record in the case would be. The county had moved to admit its full legislative record, roughly 8,500 pages, on the theory that a challenge to a legislative act puts the whole record in play and that the county could not know which documents mattered before seeing the plaintiffs' demurrer opposition. Strother argued the county had failed to identify which documents were essential and should "not be given the opportunity to dump" the volume on the court, citing as an example a Virginia Mercury article dated weeks after the adoption vote that the county had included. Sanner agreed the wholesale filing was excessive, denied admission, and directed a pared-down set germane to the case, with the county free to return after reviewing the plaintiffs' theory.[43][45]

The discipline this study applies elsewhere applies here doubly: the ruling is about the record, not the merits. It establishes no defect in the adoption and voids nothing. What it does establish is tempo. Per the county's own litigation update of May 2026, the modified record was due at the end of June, the plaintiffs' response to the county's challenges was due July 21, additional county records were to follow in late August, and the demurrer was set for argument on October 20, 2026.[8][43] The ordinance operated unreviewed for more than eleven months, from adoption on November 6, 2025 to the first merits-adjacent hearing on October 20, 2026. Haas said she was "pleased" with the result, and the residents said they did not plan to back down.[43]

The October 20 Hearing

On the county's account, that schedule held. The county filed its modified legislative record on June 30, 2026, and both parties filed briefs on the county's demurrer over the summer. Judge Sanner heard the demurrer on Tuesday, October 20, 2026, in a hearing the county describes as lasting almost three hours; at its opening the plaintiffs asked the court to nonsuit the later counts and keep the first three, which allege violations of advertisement, notice and public hearing requirements, a lack of uniformity among the TOD regulations, and a violation of the Goochland County zoning ordinance; the county's update counts three of the nine original claims remaining. Count IV, which cast the post-hearing change as an unlawful downzoning, was among those dropped. Per the county, the judge "did not issue a ruling at the hearing" and said he would issue a written opinion, with no timeframe given. No ruling had been reported as of November 9, 2026, on the county's case page, in Richmond BizSense, or on the Goochland on my mind blog. Like the May ruling, the hearing establishes no defect in the adoption and voids nothing.[49]

PART SIX: WHAT THE OVERLAY WAS BUILT TO RECEIVE

Tuckahoe Technology Park

The district's first application arrived June 10, 2026, two days before this snapshot, as what the county calls a pre-application. Tract, the Denver land developer whose Mountain Road campus Hanover rejected on May 27 and whose 744-acre Chesterfield proposal died at the commission stage in 2025, as the companion Chesterfield study records,[25] filed a pre-application for a conditional use permit for "Tuckahoe Technology Park": nearly 900 acres across thirteen parcels owned by members of the Haddock, Stern, and Arenstein families, under contract to Tract, in TOD West, bordered by Hockett Road, Patterson Avenue, Route 288, and the Mosaic at West Creek neighborhood.[50] Concept plans show seven development areas and twelve data center buildings, most at 60 feet with one area at 80, with 500-foot setbacks where the ordinance requires them. Tract projects $3 billion in construction over 20 years, $400 million in real property tax and more than $600 million in personal property tax over the same horizon, and 350 permanent jobs. Water and sewer would extend from the Tuckahoe Creek Service District along Hockett Road. No megawatt figure appeared in the coverage of the pre-application as of this snapshot.[50]

The filing covers the TOD West land whose inclusion in the district Lyle tried and failed to strip on adoption night. Because the site is TOD West, the application takes the conditional path: a community meeting, a planning commission hearing, a board hearing, the discretionary process the rest of the district does not require. The first project filed under the overlay will therefore be decided the old way. No hearing dates were public as of this snapshot. A different site may test the by-right path first: the roughly 1,000-acre West Creek site for which a county release named Google in October 2026 lies inside the district, where a data center would be by right with no public hearing, and the county said on October 28, 2026 that Google had submitted no plans (Part Eight).

Tract held a community meeting on the proposal at Goochland High School on July 23, 2026, as WTVR reported. The formal application followed. On August 5, 2026, the county received a formal application for a conditional use permit from VALCO2 Goochland, LLC (Tract), case CU-2026-00014. The county's Completeness Letter #1 of August 20 listed outstanding items, and the county also encouraged the applicant, "While not required for a complete application," to provide further documentation, including a health impact assessment, an environmental impact analysis, air quality impact, a decommissioning plan, a monitoring plan for the end user, clarification of its financial modeling, and a plan for managing construction traffic. The county's project page, in an update dated September 1, 2026, describes "a campus-style

development with seven (7) development areas on 871 acres in the Technology Overlay District." The applicant's tax model, posted on the county's project page and dated July 2026, assumes 900 MW across nine buildings totaling 2,340,000 square feet; Richmond BizSense, reporting the formal filing, wrote that "According to filings, the 900-megawatt campus would be developed over several years," on a site of 11 parcels, against the thirteen reported in June. As of November 9, 2026, the county's project page listed no Planning Commission or Board hearing date, and the application did not appear on the Planning Commission's posted agenda for October 26, 2026, although BizSense had reported in August that the commission could consider it "at its October meeting at the earliest." The county states that "The CUP process generally takes 90 to 120 days."[51]

Tract was rejected in Hanover on May 27 and filed its pre-application in Goochland on June 10, fourteen days later. Its work on the Goochland site began earlier: by the county's account, Tract contacted the county about the TOD West property on November 17, 2025, after which Tract, the county, and the EDA entered a nondisclosure agreement on it.[40]

The SMR Thread, Run to Ground

The September 2025 broadcast coverage of residents alarmed by "a proposed data center and nuclear reactor development" requires careful unwinding, because the alarm was real and the proposal was not.[52] What happened: the draft ordinance was amended during the summer to add three use definitions, small modular nuclear reactor facility, natural gas peaking plant, and utility generating station, to serve projected data center power demand. No SMR proposal, proponent, applicant, or site is attached to any Goochland campus in the county and Commission records read through November 9, 2026. The county's FAQ states the district "does not authorize or approve the construction or installation of a small modular reactor," and any actual reactor would face NRC and DEQ review on top of the CUP the ordinance requires.[39] The county administrator's reported siting comment was hypothetical, pointing north of I-64 toward the landfill and quarry.*[53] Dominion's actual SMR activity sits at North Anna in Louisa County, with an Amazon partnership targeting nuclear capacity there; no Dominion filing or statement read for this study, the West Creek case's Final Order and examiner's report among them, connects any reactor to Goochland.[54] The companion Hanover study reports the Dominion IRP's roughly 1.3 GW of SMR capacity through the late 2030s; that figure is a system-wide planning number, not a Goochland commitment.[55]

What Goochland actually did was zone for a reactor before anyone asked for one, extending the overlay from the demand side of the data center economy to the supply side; every generating use, SMRs included, requires a conditional use permit

anywhere in the district.[21] The series has tabled co-located generation as a coming issue since the Google-CFS report; Goochland wrote it into land-use law by name, nuclear and gas peaking units included, and its residents organized against a power plant that exists only as a definition. “Chernobyl on the James” was rhetoric. The use category that provoked it is real, adopted, and waiting.

The Corridor’s Other Transactions

The recorded transactions read for this study show steady institutional movement around the district and no speculative wave. The dominant land-control event is Tract’s purchase contract itself, unrecorded and unpriced in the public sources read. Recorded transactions bracket it: HCA sold its long-closed West Creek emergency center on about 57 acres for $11 million in late September 2025 to an entity tied to Richmond developer Rob Chesson; Summit Real Estate Group and Loci Capital bought 23 acres in West Creek from Brandywine Realty Trust for $4.6 million in October 2025 and broke ground in January 2026 on a 221,000-square-foot speculative industrial building; Eli Lilly’s $5 billion facility, announced September 16, 2025, anchors the corridor’s non-data-center future.[56][57][9] A December 2024 rezoning involving the TOD West families’ land was approved over neighbors’ objections that it landlocked them.*[58] BizSense’s DeedBook transfer lists sit behind a paywall, and a fuller transaction sweep is a Part Thirteen item.

PART SEVEN: THE FISCAL ARCHITECTURE

The Rate Nobody Repriced

Goochland taxes data center equipment at $0.44 per $100 of assessed value, against $3.75 for general business personal property: an 88 percent discount, re-adopted in the county's CY2026 rate resolution on April 14, 2026.[59][60] The county's economic development site lists an effective rate of $0.26 per $100 for data center business personal property and does not explain how it is derived.[61] The classification dates to April 2019, when the rate was set at $0.40; the move to $0.44 is undated in available sources.[13]

The regional table makes the posture legible. Rates per $100 of assessed value on data center equipment, as of this snapshot, with Hanover's June 24, 2026 vote added:

Locality	Rate	Direction
Fairfax	$4.57 (general BTPP)	Stable
Prince William	$4.50	Raised (from $4.15, FY2027)
Loudoun	$4.15 (general PP)	Stable
New Kent	$3.75 (general TPP; no DC class)	No class
Caroline	$3.50 (BPP/M&T; technology zone rebates apply)	No separate class
Henrico	$2.60	Raised (from $0.40, 2025)
Orange	$1.25	Stable
Spotsylvania	$1.25	SUP reform pending
Louisa	$1.25 (data center equipment class since Sept. 2023; general business PP $1.90)	Unchanged in FY2027 levies
Hanover	$0.45 (set by calendar-year resolution; not carried in the April 8 FY2027 budget); existing rate kept for one calendar year on June 24, 2026, after a proposed rate of up to $3.00; question referred to committee for FY2028	Increase weighed; rate kept
Goochland	$0.44 ($0.26 listed effective rate)	Stable
Chesterfield	$0.24 (classification rate since 2019; 30-year locks in 2025 agreements)	Contracted

Sources: county rate schedules and budget coverage; see endnote for the full citation set. Henrico's revenue division page, read November 9, 2026, gives the $2.60 rate; the Hanover vote came twelve days after this snapshot.[62][63]

Hanover's existing $0.45 rate dates to 2023. On June 24, 2026, its board adopted $0.45 for calendar year 2026, 7-0, and referred the rate to its Finance Committee for the FY2028 budget process, as the companion Hanover study records from the adopted minutes.[55][63]

The table's shape is the finding. Henrico, which recruited with a discounted rate, repriced upward after seeing the industry up close, multiplying its rate six and a half times; Prince William, whose data center rate matches its general rate for computer equipment, raised it from $4.15 to $4.50 for FY2027. Hanover, which sets the rate by calendar-year resolution, left it out of its April 8 budget, advertised a hearing at up to $3.00, and then on June 24, 2026, after this snapshot, kept its existing $0.45 rate for one calendar year and sent the question to committee.[55] Goochland, holding the second-cheapest rate in the table, re-adopted it unchanged five months after adopting an overlay of 4,400 acres, and its FY2027 budget as proposed in February 2026 booked essentially no revenue from the district: the personal property and business equipment line is flat at $21.4 million.[64] The utility finance framework gets a clean statement of the pricing-before-buildout problem the Hanover study poses. Goochland created its class in 2019 at $0.40, moved it to $0.44 at a date the sources read do not give, built the entitlement around it in 2025, and re-adopted $0.44 in April 2026. Tract's own tax model assumes the current rate: $639 million in business personal property tax over twenty years at $0.44, beside $446 million in real property tax.[51] Each penny of rate the county forgoes before equipment arrives is a penny contractually harder to recover after, as Chesterfield's 30-year locks demonstrate in the companion study.

The Expenditure Side of the Ledger

The county's own ledger around the district, FY2026 to date: $250,000 appropriated to defend the adoption lawsuit (February 3, 2026); a separate $250,000 earmarked in April 2026 to oppose the Valley Link transmission project crossing the county, which is unrelated to the TOD and should not be conflated with the defense money; and the staff cost, uncounted in any line item of the budget documents read, of producing an 8,500-page legislative record, a months-long FOIA stream, and an open litigation calendar.[5][65] The $250,000 defense appropriation, set against no data center revenue line in the FY2027 budget, is the current arithmetic of the bet.

PART EIGHT: WATER AND POWER

Water

The district's water architecture is contractual and cross-boundary. The Tuckahoe Creek Service District buys from Henrico: 5.25 MGD under current contract, 25 MGD at ultimate contractual capacity, with wastewater agreements to Henrico and Richmond and some 462,000 gallons per day of legacy private reservations inside the district, Capital One's 150,000 GPD the largest.[10] The TOD makes public water and sewer mandatory for data centers and the FAQ assigns connection and upgrade costs to developers.[8][66] Tract's application proposes extending TCSD lines along Hockett Road.[50] The FY2027 capital budget carries a $16.95 million bond-funded booster pump station in the eastern county; no county document read ties it to the district.[64]

No published analysis located for this study, as of this snapshot, models district buildout demand against the Henrico contract's headroom. The comparison the record invites: Hanover's board rejected a single campus of about 427 acres with water in all four supervisors' stated rationales, after staff found it "expected to use 90% of existing water supply capacity within the Elmont Pressure Zone," in a 24.7 MGD system of which 20.7 MGD is contract water from Richmond and Henrico.[55] Goochland's overlay covers roughly ten times that campus's acreage, on water it buys from the neighbor whose residents opposed the district at the podium. The dependency cuts both ways, and neither county has published what it means in the documents located for this study. For the energy and labor infrastructure framework, the unanswered question is the one Hanover's majority asked: what does peak day look like at buildout, and who bears it.

Power

Dominion moved before the first application did. In November 2025, the month of adoption, Dominion announced the West Creek project: a new substation and a new double-circuit 230kV transmission line "to ease the load on the local distribution network serving Goochland and Henrico counties and to support recently announced development projects." The community meeting came December 4, 2025; the SCC application was filed January 28, 2026, as Case No. PUR-2026-00009; public comment closed June 9; the public witness and evidentiary hearings were set for June 16.[67] The case's filings named both Eli Lilly and the Technology Overlay District, on the Chief Hearing Examiner's account of them. His report of July 14, 2026 states that Dominion's application of January 28, 2026 proposed the new substation "on land provided by Eli Lilly" (Ex. 2 at 2-3) and that its appendix carried "Eli Lilly's delivery point request" for 37 MW of projected load (Ex. 2, Appendix, at

13-14); that Dominion's routing study "identified Goochland County's Technology Overlay District in addition to the Technology Overlay District West" (Ex. 4, Appendix B, Figure 3.1-3); and that the Staff Report of May 15, 2026 discussed "the projected load associated with Eli Lilly's planned manufacturing facility" and identified "the Technology Overlay District and Technology Zone approved in the area" (Ex. 24 at 4-5). The application and routing study are read here through the examiner's report. The "recently announced development projects" formulation covers Eli Lilly, whom the application names, as well as any data center demand.[68] In an order VPM News reported on February 9, 2026, the SCC approved a Dominion project in western Chesterfield that VPM described as "aimed in part to power future data centers."[69]

The case has since been decided and appealed. The evidentiary hearing went ahead on June 16, 2026 before the Commission's Chief Hearing Examiner, whose report followed on July 14. On September 10, 2026, the Commission entered a Final Order adopting the report's findings and recommendations and authorizing Dominion "to construct and operate the Project as proposed in its Application": a double-circuit 230 kV line of "approximately 6.5 miles" on the Proposed Route, Route 3, and a new substation "on land provided by Eli Lilly," at an estimated cost of "approximately $97.5 million (in 2025 dollars)." The order recites that Dominion proposed the project "to serve the projected load identified in the delivery point request of approximately 37 megawatts for a new manufacturing facility and new warehouses in Goochland County, Virginia, as well as to support future load growth in the Goochland Load Area," and adopts the examiner's finding that the project "is needed to provide electric service to Eli Lilly, while also maintaining and ensuring system reliability more broadly in the Goochland Load Area." It issued Certificate No. ET-DEV-GOO-2026-A and provides that the project "must be constructed and in service by July 26, 2028," with a certificate sunset date of July 26, 2029. On October 9, 2026, Asgard Broad Street Properties I LLC, a participant that had opposed Route 3 for the line's northern segment, filed a notice of appeal to the Supreme Court of Virginia from the Final Order, and the Commission's docket listed the case as "Under Appeal" when read on November 9, 2026, with no filing after the October 9 notice. A notice of appeal is not a ruling. No petition for appeal, briefing schedule, or stay appears on the Commission's docket as of November 9, 2026.[70]

The record had described data center load before this snapshot. Dominion's rebuttal testimony of Dominic J. Minor, filed May 29, 2026 and admitted at the June 16 hearing as Exhibit 38, answered Commission Staff's preference for Alternative Route 5, which Staff had based in part on the lack of a firm commitment for data center development at the West Creek Industrial site. Minor testified that Dominion had issued an Engineering Study Letter of Authorization (ELOA) for "a proposed 200

MW development which will require the construction of a new substation," and that "The customer is currently reviewing the ELOA for final execution"; that "Another customer has executed four (4) ELOAs totaling 1200 MW, which will require the construction of four (4) new substations"; and that "Another customer has executed three (3) ELOAs totaling 900 MW, which will require construction of three (3) new substations." He added that "Route 3 crosses parcels associated with the 1200 MW development, 200 MW development, and 900 MW development," and that this "ability to serve future load makes Route 3 more preferable." The exhibit's public version names no customer. An ELOA is a Dominion engineering-study authorization, not a county application or a load commitment, and Staff had found the developer's load letter not "sufficient to establish a binding commitment for data center development at the West Creek Industrial site." The Richmond Times-Dispatch reported the testimony on August 6, 2026, with a county spokesperson's statement that the county knew of the 1,200 MW and 200 MW requests only through the testimony in the SCC proceeding and that the only data center project the county had received was the Tuckahoe Technology Park pre-application. On October 28, 2026, Richmond BizSense reported that a county news release had named Google as the user for a potential 1,200-megawatt campus on a roughly 1,000-acre site in West Creek Business Park, which BizSense tied to the customer the Commission record describes as having executed four ELOAs; Google confirmed its interest, and BizSense reported that it was performing due diligence on the property; County Administrator Jeremy Raley told BizSense by email that Google had submitted no plans. BizSense reported that the site lies inside the TOD, so that a data center there "would be a by-right use and would not need to go through the public hearing process." By BizSense's account of the county's release, the county entered a nondisclosure agreement with Google on January 10, 2024, county staff met Google officials once, on January 30, 2024, and the Virginia Economic Development Partnership then told the county that Google "was not interested and was not moving forward"; BizSense reported that Google re-engaged with the county after the TOD's adoption.[71]

Above the distribution layer, the county is fighting the same buildout it is courting. Goochland passed a resolution in April 2026 opposing Valley Link's 115-mile transmission line, which would cross the county, a project Richmond BizSense reported at $1 billion, and put $250,000 behind the opposition.[65] The juxtaposition is the energy geography framework's to savor: a county zoned for gigawatt-class load, resisting the interregional wires that gigawatt-class load summons, while funding both positions from the same general fund.

PART NINE: THE OPPOSITION ACROSS THE LINE

Who Organized

The opposition's institutional form is the Goochland Residents Alliance, which hosted the final pre-vote town hall on November 3, 2025 at Discovery United Methodist Church, drawing residents from Goochland, Henrico, and Hanover, with the Sierra Club Virginia chapter's communications director, Tim Cywinski, presenting on noise, diesel generators, and environmental impacts.[34] The neighborhood base was the corridor's HOAs: Readers Branch, whose 50-foot exposure under the original draft started the August backlash, and Mosaic at West Creek, whose designated speaker delivered the "sacrifice zone" line.[27][28] Stephen Levet ran the FOIA campaign that put the 1,000-email opposition record into the public domain.[34][35] The litigation is the same constituency by other means: the four plaintiffs are corridor-area property owners, the donor base is reported at roughly 300 residents, and Gessner, the plaintiffs' informal legal counsel in BizSense's description, frames the stakes in movement terms: "We're in it to win it."[20][42] Of the statewide network, only the Sierra Club, a Data Center Reform Coalition member, appears directly in the Goochland record read for this study as of this snapshot; the Piedmont Environmental Council's coalition lists no Goochland member group as of November 9, 2026, and the Alliance's relationship to the coalition is an open item (Part Thirteen).[72]

The Cross-Boundary Pattern, Named

Goochland is the third case in this series in which organized opposition crossed a county line, and the pattern now deserves its own statement. In Hanover, the Wyndham community on the Henrico side organized against Hunting Hawk, the same constituency whose resistance had driven Henrico's reforms. In Orange, the opposition drew on Spotsylvania-adjacent networks seasoned by that county's fights. In Goochland, Henrico residents and two sitting Henrico supervisors opposed an ordinance they had no vote on, in a county whose water their county supplies. The pattern: data center burdens propagate along corridors and watersheds, but representation stops at the county line, so the people most practiced in opposing a land use are persistently the people with no franchise over the next decision about it. Roundtree and Rogish could speak at Goochland's podium; their constituents could not vote at Goochland's election. The distributional justice framework should treat this as a structural feature of Virginia's county-by-county land use regime, not an accident of this case: the overlay's benefits are jurisdictionally captured, the externalities are not, and the mismatch widens with every instrument whose burdens cross a county line.

The Henrico side of the line also supplies the counterfactual the opposition kept pointing at. Henrico spent June 2025 adopting the inverse instrument: provisional use permits for new stand-alone data centers countywide, 500-foot residential setbacks, and a White Oak overlay concentrating the industry in Varina, reform adopted after its entitlements were granted, as the companion Henrico study documents at length.[73] Roundtree's "gift" framing at the November 6 hearing was an argument from regret: Goochland still possessed the discretion Henrico had to claw back, and the overlay would spend it.

PART TEN: NEW KENT'S DRAFT OVERLAY

New Kent County, two counties east, presented a draft technology overlay district of its own while Goochland's was three months old and in litigation. The chronology: the board commissioned a Dewberry site-suitability study in April 2025; staff visited Louisa and Culpeper in January 2026; the director of community development presented a draft to the planning commission on February 17, 2026, and to the board a week later; BizSense's headline framed it as "Following Goochland's lead."[74][75] The draft covers roughly 1,800 gross acres along the Route 33 corridor at Eltham Road, 1.3 percent of county land, most of it owned by an entity tied to Jonathan Kinney.[74]

The design choices differ from Goochland's on several points. No SMR or peaker-plant category at all; energy generation requires a full conditional use permit. Lower height cap (85 feet including rooftop equipment), 200-foot setbacks from residential and agricultural, noise at 65/60 dBA, generator testing 9 to 5 weekdays, mandatory water-use analysis with each submittal. And on the decisive question of discretion, a hybrid: data centers would proceed by "administrative conditional use permit," no public hearing per project, Goochland's by-right machinery wearing a CUP label. Commissioner Patricia Townsend caught the substance at the February presentation, asking the staff director to confirm that once adopted, developers "would never come back to the planning commission." The answer was yes.[76]

Staff framing leaned protective. The community development director described a "proactive approach to set standards and expectations specific to New Kent and what New Kent wants to see," and said: "we're not doing it to cater to them, we're doing it to protect ourselves and be prepared if and when we get (an application)."[74] The February timeline contemplated community meetings from March, a commission hearing in May or June, and a board vote in June or July. As of this snapshot the county's planning page still labels the instrument a draft and no hearing is scheduled; the schedule has slipped, and whether the Goochland litigation caused the slip is unestablished in any source read at this snapshot.[75]

After this snapshot the draft stopped. At its meeting of Monday, July 13, 2026, the New Kent Board of Supervisors declared that the proposed 1,800-acre district "should not proceed in its current form" and directed county staff and the planning commission to discontinue work on it; no source read reports a tally for that action. The same night the board approved, 3-2, a rezoning of about 343 acres for The Curtis Group's Eltham Business Park, and directed staff to draft a data center ordinance with "strict performance standards." On Tuesday, September 29, 2026, at a work session, the board rejected Resolution R-41-26, which would have initiated a zoning ordinance amendment imposing a two-year moratorium on data centers: polled,

Supervisors Evelyn, Moyer and Pearson voted nay and Supervisors Stiers and Stewart aye. The same session reviewed draft data center performance standards, and the county's community development director said public hearings on the ordinance should wait until February at the earliest. Richmond BizSense's account of the July decision does not mention Goochland, and whether the Goochland litigation bore on that decision is unestablished in the sources read through November 9, 2026.[77]

The form that Louisa, Goochland and New Kent used is older than any of their districts. Prince William's 2016 Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District made data centers a by-right use inside a mapped overlay sited near transmission lines of 115 kV or more.[14] Louisa's 2023 district showed the form's costs in one county: by-right entitlement produced an anchor tenant, then a backlash, then a retrofitted CUP and a rollback fight still unresolved in the Louisa records posted as of November 9, 2026.[18] Goochland's 2025 district shares Louisa's by-right core, added money (the Technology Zone) and generation (the SMR category), compressed adoption into four months, and drew a lawsuit over its adoption and its text. New Kent's 2026 draft, which BizSense framed as following Goochland's lead, had no nuclear or peaker category and kept hearing-free approval under a CUP label; its noise limits, 65 dBA by day and 60 at night, were looser than Goochland's adopted 55 dBA and matched the numbers in Goochland's July 2025 draft.[8][74] No record read for this study shows any of these counties drafting from another's text. In the records read for this study, neither Louisa's district nor New Kent's draft has faced the test Goochland's lawsuit poses: whether an ordinance that sets data center entitlement district-wide can survive a court challenge to its adoption and its text.

PART ELEVEN: REGIONAL CONTEXT AND THE FIFTH POSITION

The series' institutional spectrum, as of this snapshot. Henrico reformed after entitling: by-right growth to eight million grandfathered square feet, then PUPs, setbacks, and a six-and-a-half-fold rate increase that the already-entitled pipeline largely escapes. Hanover refused case by case: one campus approved, two refused, leverage husbanded, an increase in the price of entry weighed before any facility operates and, on June 24, 2026, set aside when the board kept $0.45 and referred the question to committee. Chesterfield contracted its leverage away: conditional use requirements on paper, 30-year rate locks in practice. Prince William's governance was captured and corrected: the revolving door, the Digital Gateway voiding, the $4.50 rate, the standardized proffer architecture built from the wreckage. Goochland set its terms by ordinance: across most of its district, data centers proceed by right under the ordinance's standards, on land most of which West Creek's 1987 zoning had already opened to them, and the citizens' counter-instrument was a courtroom.[55][73]

Two features distinguish the fifth position. First, the locus of the citizens' check moved. In Henrico and Hanover, opposition worked through the land-use process itself: hearings, elections, applications denied or withdrawn. In Goochland the district's adoption was completed in a single night, so opposition moved to court, and the operative question changed from "should this be approved" to "was this lawfully adopted and lawfully written." Litigation over an adopted ordinance is slower, more technical, and harder to mobilize around than a rezoning fight, and it runs on a docket clock while the entitlement runs on an administrative one. Tract held the Tuckahoe Technology Park community meeting on July 23, 2026; as of November 9, 2026, the demurrer had been argued without a ruling, and the application had no hearing date.[51] If the plaintiffs ultimately prevail, the county will face the question Prince William faced after the Digital Gateway voiding: what happens to approvals issued under an ordinance later held void. If the county prevails, the form is validated at its most aggressive setting, and New Kent's caution becomes optional. Either outcome instructs the next county more than anything in the ordinance text.

Second, the record tests a prediction about where development pressure goes. The Hanover study (v2.0, June 2026) closed by predicting development pressure would relocate toward "Louisa, Charles City, New Kent, Goochland, and the next ring of counties where the framework is still permissive and the opposition is not yet organized." Tract did file in Goochland fourteen days after the Hanover vote, although, by the county's account, it had been pursuing the site since November

2025 (Part Six). Neither half of the sentence fits Goochland cleanly: by the Hanover study's own June 12, 2026 snapshot date, Goochland's framework was seven months past permissive-by-default (it was permissive by adopted design), and its opposition had been organized for nearly a year, with four plaintiffs, a donor base, and a hearing date.

PART TWELVE: READINGS BY RESEARCH SPECIALTY

The Institutional Behavior Reading

Goochland offers the portfolio's cleanest natural experiment on the question of whether pre-entitlement by ordinance outruns democratic and judicial checks. The chronology is the evidence: adoption November 6, 2025; suit December 4; first pre-application June 10, 2026, and formal application August 5; first merits-adjacent hearing October 20, 2026, with no ruling reported as of November 9, 2026; no project hearing date set as of that date, and the application's review proceeding throughout. The richest artifacts are the night-of amendments (each one resident-protective, each one post-notice, the tightening and the alleged defect being the same act); the tandem-hearing deferral that put both ordinances to a vote in a single midnight session; the died-without-a-second pattern around Lyle's motions, which isolates where deferral failed; and the county's litigation-confidence posture ("a model of good government in action") set against its capacity admission ("we don't have the staffing"). The 122-day adoption arc against the sixteen months Louisa took to retrofit a conditional use permit onto its district (April 2023 to August 2024) is one measure of how fast Goochland moved.

The Distributional Justice Reading

The corridor's burden-bearers are identifiable: Readers Branch (300+ homes, 50 feet from entitled land under the pre-TOD rules), Mosaic at West Creek (a 55+ community bordering an application of roughly 900 acres at this snapshot, 871 acres in the county's September 2026 description), and the Hockett Road edge. The benefit side is the county general fund and the Technology Zone's qualifying firms. The structural finding is the franchise mismatch of Part Nine: the opposition was partly extraterritorial, Henrico residents and officials with no vote over the board that decided, and the watershed and viewshed do not respect the line that the ballot does. This study has not done the tract-level analysis that the Henrico and Hanover studies did for Varina and Tract 3202, so no racial siting pattern or income disparity is established for the corridor; the analysis is listed in Part Thirteen. What is already established is procedural: the accounts of the adoption report 1,000-plus emails, most of them opposed, more than 80 speakers in opposition and, by BizSense's account, no speaker in favor, and the instrument passed 4-1. Whatever the corridor's demographics turn out to be, the decision-to-consent ratio is already a finding.

The Utility Finance Reading

Three mechanisms. First, the unrepriced rate: a class created in 2019 at $0.40, now $0.44 and re-adopted unchanged in April 2026, second-cheapest in the Part Seven table, while Henrico and Prince William repriced upward and Hanover weighed an

increase; Tract's own tax model assumes the current $0.44 rate in projecting $639 million in business personal property tax over twenty years.[51] Second, the incentive stack: TZ fee reimbursements up to 100 percent on top of the equipment discount on top of the state sales tax exemption documented in the companion statewide report, a triple subsidy whose fiscal side rests on the applicant's own projections. Third, the expenditure side: $250,000 to defend the adoption, beside a separate $250,000 against Valley Link, against no data center revenue line in the FY2027 budget as proposed, the litigation cost of pre-entitlement being a cost that no fiscal case for the instrument in the county records read included. The Dominion West Creek SCC file (PUR-2026-00009) and the GS-5 rate class treated in the companion Hanover study connect the county ledger to the ratepayer one.

The Energy, Labor, and Infrastructure Reading

The infrastructure record is thinner than Hanover's because no project has been decided, which is itself the point: the entitlement preceded the engineering. As of this snapshot, no published analysis located for this study modeled district buildout against the 5.25/25 MGD Henrico water contract, and no MW figure appeared in the first application's coverage, although the applicant's tax model, dated July 2026, now assumes 900 MW (Part Six); the transmission response (a 230kV line and substation) was announced the month of adoption, before any data center application had been filed with the county; Dominion's application to the Commission, filed January 28, 2026, carried Eli Lilly's delivery point request (Part Eight). The Commission's September 10, 2026 final order adopts a finding that the line is needed to serve Eli Lilly and system reliability in the Goochland Load Area; the data center load in the case record is described in Part Eight. The labor evidence at this stage is projection-only: Tract's projected 350 permanent jobs on roughly 900 acres (June 2026 coverage), against the Eli Lilly comparator next door (650 permanent jobs on 227 acres) and JLARC's December 2024 finding, as the companion Hanover study records it, of roughly 25 to 50 permanent jobs per data center building.[55]

The Energy Geography Reading

Two processes are visible. Developers move among counties: Tract, whose Chesterfield proposal died at the commission stage and whose Hanover campus the board refused, has a Goochland application pending, on a site it had pursued since November 2025. Ordinance forms recur: overlays for data centers run from Prince William's 2016 district through Louisa's 2023 district and Goochland's 2025 district, each by right at adoption, to New Kent's 2026 draft, which used an administrative conditional use permit; BizSense framed New Kent's draft as following Goochland's lead, and New Kent's board stopped it on July 13, 2026 (Part Ten). No record read

for this study shows one county drafting from another’s text. The SMR category is the frontier observation: co-located generation entering land-use law ahead of any generation proposal, the energy system’s supply side entering zoning code by conditional use permit. The Valley Link fight adds the interregional layer: the county simultaneously courts terminal load and resists through-wires, a posture only coherent at the county scale and incoherent at the grid scale, which is precisely the scale mismatch the framework studies.

PART THIRTEEN: GAPS IN THE RECORD

Each item below is an open documentary question with an address. Items marked with an asterisk are primary records that would confirm claims this study reports from secondary sources or from one party's account.

Status of Pending Matters

Status as of November 9, 2026.

The demurrer. Argued October 20, 2026 before Judge Timothy K. Sanner, who said he would issue a written opinion; the county reports no timeframe was given, and no ruling had been reported as of November 9, 2026. Three of the nine original counts remain. Primary sources: the opinion and order when they issue, and the clerk's file (Goochland Circuit Court, No. CL25-1270).

The record sequence. The county filed its modified legislative record on June 30, 2026, and both parties filed briefs on the demurrer during the summer, on the county's account. The county posts the plaintiffs' brief in opposition and its own reply brief on its case page (goochlandva.us/1408).

The Tuckahoe Technology Park process. Community meeting held July 23, 2026; formal application CU-2026-00014 received August 5, 2026; Completeness Letter #1 issued August 20; no Planning Commission or Board hearing date posted as of November 9, 2026. The hearings, when set, are the first occasion for project-level water, power, and employment numbers on the county's record. Sources: the county's project page (goochlandva.us/1480) and posted agendas.

The county's two ordinance amendments. Data centers confined to the TOD; the TOD's uses and standards re-adopted. The Planning Commission's recommendation is due by January 22, 2027; the county scheduled a community meeting on the drafts for November 10, 2026, and no Planning Commission or Board hearing dates were posted as of November 9, 2026 (goochlandva.us/1490).

Hanover and New Kent. Hanover kept its $0.45 rate for calendar year 2026 on June 24, 2026 and referred the rate to its Finance Committee for FY2028 (Part Seven). New Kent's board stopped its draft overlay on July 13, 2026 and rejected a two-year moratorium on September 29, 2026; an ordinance was being drafted, and the county's community development director said public hearings on it should wait until February 2027 at the earliest (Part Ten). No New Kent data center ordinance had been adopted in the county records read through the board's October 13, 2026 meeting, at which the board added a joint work session with its Planning Commission for December 8, 2026.[77]

The Dominion West Creek case (PUR-2026-00009). Final Order entered September 10, 2026; notice of appeal to the Supreme Court of Virginia filed October 9, 2026 by Asgard Broad Street Properties I LLC (Part Eight). As of November 9, 2026, the docket showed no filing after the October 9 notice. Open: any petition for appeal, record certification, or stay; and Dominion's application and routing study, which this study reads through the Chief Hearing Examiner's account of them (Part Eight). Source: the Commission's docket (scc.virginia.gov/docketsearch, case 146726).

Primary-Source Verification Priorities

*The complaint. The county posts it as a non-searchable scan; its nine counts are reported here through the county's Responsive Pleading and news coverage, and the specific advertised-versus-adopted changes it alleges are in the clerk's file (No. CL25-1270).

*The rejected 8,500-page record's index and the pared-down set. The index alone would map the county's own theory of its adoption record; the difference between the two filings will show what the county itself treats as essential.

*The ordinance adoption file: the published advertisements themselves (the heart of the Glazebrook question), staff reports, and redlines between the October 20 posted version and the adopted version. The county's own news flashes describe the night-of amendments; the redline would establish them character by character.

*The hearing recordings. The November 6 meeting (available on the county's YouTube channel) is prime ethnographic material: a meeting of more than six hours by NBC12's account, more than 80 speakers in opposition by the Virginia Mercury's count, the night-of amendments presented live, each supervisor's full reasoning including Christy's, which the print coverage read did not capture. The September 18 and 25 commission sessions likewise.

*TZ incentive agreements, if any yet exist, and any performance agreements under Section 8-104(3).

*Corridor land records: the Tract contract terms if recorded at closing, the DeedBook series behind BizSense's paywall, and the December 2024 rezoning file for the TOD West parcels.

*The Glazebrook opinion itself, 266 Va. 550, described here through the Court of Appeals' 2026 opinion.

*The Lyle email and the FOIA production around it, reported by an advocacy site.

Data Gaps

Corridor demographics. No tract-level income or race analysis of the TOD-adjacent population has been done; ACS tables for the Centerville/West Creek tracts would put the distributional reading on the same footing as Henrico's and Hanover's.

The water arithmetic. District buildout demand against the Henrico contract: no document located for this study models it. The 16.95 million dollar booster pump station's relationship to the TOD. TCSD reserved-capacity accounting.

The overlay's new entitlement. The adopted TOD ordinance and map (goochlandva.us DocumentCenter), to size how much land outside West Creek's 1987 zoning and TOD West the overlay opened to by-right data centers.

Institutional capacity baseline. Total county FTEs, planning department staffing, and the administrative load of CMP/POD review at buildout.

The Alliance and the coalition. Whether the Goochland Residents Alliance has formal ties to the Data Center Reform Coalition; its membership, funding, and relationship to the plaintiffs.

New Kent's stop. The New Kent Board of Supervisors' record for July 13, 2026 (newkent-va.us Agenda Center): the tally on the overlay directive, and whether it ties that decision to the Goochland litigation. The September 29, 2026 action agenda, packet and meeting video do not mention Goochland.

The end users. Tract's model leaves operators unidentified at entitlement, in Goochland as in Hanover. Who would operate the Tuckahoe Technology Park campus is not identified in the public record read through November 9, 2026. A county news release of October 28, 2026, as Richmond BizSense reported it, named Google as the user for a separate potential 1,200-megawatt campus in West Creek; the county said Google had submitted no plans (Part Eight).

APPENDIX: TIMELINE OF TURNING POINTS, 2019–2026

Date	Event
Apr. 2019	County creates $0.40 data center equipment rate (now $0.44, 88% below the $3.75 general rate)
Apr. 3, 2023	Louisa adopts its Technology Overlay District (Ord. 2023-6, 6-1)
Jan. 2024	Board special meeting names economic development among its priorities; the 2024 board sets a 70/30 revenue-split goal
Aug. 5, 2024	Louisa retrofits CUP requirement onto TOD uses (Ord. 2024-11)
Dec. 2024	Board approves West Creek-area rezoning of TOD West families' parcels over neighbors' objections
Jul. 7, 2025	Goochland TOD/TZ introduced at first community meeting
Aug. 2025	Planning commission hearing postponed "after hearing public outcry"; Readers Branch 50-foot exposure reported
Sep. 8, 2025	Second community meeting; ~700 attend; data-center-and-nuclear alarm peaks
Sep. 16, 2025	Eli Lilly announces $5B West Creek facility
Sep. 18 / 25, 2025	Planning commission hearings; continued 4-1, then 3-2 recommendation with four conditions
Oct. 7, 2025	TZ hearing deferred to be heard in tandem with TOD
Oct. 20-21, 2025	Revised ordinances posted; the last published version before adoption
Nov. 3, 2025	Goochland Residents Alliance town hall; Sierra Club presents; three counties' residents attend
Nov. 6, 2025	Board adopts TOD and TZ 4-1 just after midnight; floor amendments adopted same night; ~350 attend, 80+ speak in opposition, none in favor by BizSense's account
Nov. 2025	Dominion announces West Creek 230kV line and substation
Dec. 4, 2025	Haas, Knisley, Reed, and Minnick sue (day 28 of the 30-day window); Dominion community meeting same day
Jan. 28, 2026	Dominion files SCC Case No. PUR-2026-00009
Feb. 3, 2026	Board appropriates $250,000 for outside counsel (Gentry Locke)
Feb. 17-24, 2026	New Kent staff presents draft technology overlay district to planning commission and board
Apr. 7, 2026	County resolves to oppose Valley Link; second $250,000 follows

Date	Event
Apr. 14, 2026	CY2026 tax rates re-adopted; $0.44 data center rate unchanged
May 5, 2026	FY2027 budget adopted, $171M, no TOD revenue assumed
May 26, 2026	Sanner rejects 8,500-page record filing; pared-down set ordered
May 27, 2026	Hanover rejects Tract's Mountain Road campus 4-3
Jun. 10, 2026	Tract files Tuckahoe Technology Park CUP pre-application: ~900 acres, 12 buildings, TOD West
Jun. 16, 2026	SCC evidentiary hearing, Dominion West Creek case, before the Chief Hearing Examiner
Jun. 24, 2026	Hanover keeps its $0.45 equipment rate for calendar year 2026, 7-0; question referred to committee
Jun. 30, 2026	County files its modified legislative record
Jul. 13, 2026	New Kent board directs that its draft technology overlay district not proceed in its current form
Jul. 14, 2026	Chief Hearing Examiner's report, Dominion West Creek case
Jul. 23, 2026	Tract holds its Tuckahoe Technology Park community meeting at Goochland High School
Summer 2026	Parties file briefs on the county's demurrer (county's account)
Aug. 5, 2026	County receives Tract's formal CUP application, CU-2026-00014
Aug. 24, 2026	County files pre-applications to confine data centers to the TOD and to re-adopt the TOD
Sep. 1, 2026	Board refers the proposed prohibition of data centers outside the TOD to the Planning Commission
Sep. 10, 2026	SCC Final Order approves the West Creek line and substation on Route 3
Sep. 29, 2026	New Kent board rejects a two-year data center moratorium, 3-2 (county Action Agenda)
Oct. 6, 2026	Board extends the Planning Commission's deadline on the two amendments to Jan. 22, 2027
Oct. 9, 2026	Asgard files notice of appeal to the Supreme Court of Virginia from the SCC order
Oct. 20, 2026	Demurrer argued, Goochland Circuit Court; plaintiffs keep three of nine counts; no ruling reported as of Nov. 9
Oct. 28, 2026	County news release names Google as user for a potential 1,200 MW West Creek campus; no plans submitted

Date	Event
Nov. 10, 2026	County community meeting on the two amendments (scheduled)

ENDNOTES

[1] The research framework categories used in this case study are the author's analytic categories, applied by type of work.

[2] Tommy N. Turner, What Virginia Is Spending, What Virginia Is Getting: The Commonwealth Data Center Reference, v5.5, November 2026, 10.5281/zenodo.20679292. Companion case studies, cited by concept DOI: Henrico County, 10.5281/zenodo.20671031; Hanover County, 10.5281/zenodo.20672048; Orange County and the Town of Orange, 10.5281/zenodo.20672496; Louisa County, 10.5281/zenodo.20673455; Prince William County, 10.5281/zenodo.20673498; Chesterfield County, 10.5281/zenodo.20672436; The Google-CFS Power Purchase Agreement, 10.5281/zenodo.20679935.

[3] Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, Virginia Population Estimates, July 1, 2025 (official estimates file published February 24, 2026): Goochland County 28,432. 2020 Census: 24,727. A 29,187 figure circulating in secondary summaries does not match the Cooper Center's published file.

[4] Goochland County, FY2027 budget: proposed February 17, 2026 at $170,997,815 all funds (including $16,951,055 in proposed bond proceeds for the Ridgefield Booster Pump Station); adopted May 5, 2026 with no tax rate increases. County news releases, February 17 and May 5, 2026; County Administrator's Proposed FY27 Budget presentation, goochlandva.us DocumentCenter.

[5] Virginia Business, "Goochland sued over technology overlay district," February 10, 2026: lawsuit filed December 4, 2025 by Cynthia Haas, Peggy Knisley, Virginia H. Reed, and Gail A. Minnick against the county, Board of Supervisors, and Planning Commission; $250,000 outside-counsel allocation at the February 3, 2026 board meeting; Gentry Locke (Roanoke) retained; VACo coverage up to $100,000; County Attorney Tara McGee staffing quote; Winfree quote; complaint language on objective standards quoted therein. Goochland County Board of Supervisors, summary minutes, February 3, 2026, Resolution 6566: $250,000 from the Unassigned General Fund "to be used for the County's defense in the Technology Overlay District litigation"; approved unanimously, Supervisor Spoonhower absent.

[6] Goochland County, FY2026 budget adopted April 15, 2025: $148.5 million total (+9.2%), County General Fund $65.7 million, real estate rate $0.53, thirteen new positions countywide. County news release.

[7] Goochland County, Planning Commission presentation on the TOD and TZ, September 18, 2025 (goochlandva.us DocumentCenter/View/12587), read October 24, 2026: "3,500 acres rezoned to industrial create West Creek Business Park"

(1987); “West Creek may develop utilizing the by-right zoning that has been in place since 1987.”

[8] Goochland County, “Technology Overlay District & Technology Zone” page, goochlandva.us/1408, including the litigation update of May 2026 (modified record due end of June 2026; plaintiffs’ response due July 21; additional county records late August; next hearing October 20, 2026), the outreach chronology (community meetings July 7 and September 8, 2025; two town halls; HOA meetings), and the county’s pre-TOD/post-TOD setback framing quoted in Part Three. The dates of the two town halls, a District 5 Town Hall on September 22, 2025 and a Countywide Town Hall on October 6, 2025, are from the index to Exhibit 1 of the county’s Responsive Pleading (DocumentCenter/View/13045). The county’s “Updated Frequently Asked Questions 10-20-25” (DocumentCenter/View/12655) and its Board of Supervisors presentation of November 6, 2025 (DocumentCenter/View/12702) compare the July 2025 draft (“65 dB day / 60 dB night cap measured at property line”) with the final proposal (“Lowered maximum noise standard to 55 dBA and added 65 dBC standard”); the presentation lists “Benchmarks with other jurisdictions” among the items that informed the final proposal. Neither document, nor the county’s other TOD planning documents searched for this study (twelve in all: the adopted TOD and TZ ordinances, the FAQs, the ordinance-change summaries, and the July, September and November 2025 presentations linked from goochlandva.us/1408, searched November 9, 2026), names Louisa.

[9] Goochland County news release, September 16, 2025; Richmond BizSense, September 17, 2025: Eli Lilly $5 billion pharmaceutical manufacturing facility on a 227-acre Markel-owned site at 12575 West Creek Parkway; 1,800 construction jobs, 650 permanent jobs.

[10] Goochland County, Tuckahoe Creek Service District FAQ pages: district created 2002; $0.32 ad valorem surtax since 2012; water purchased from Henrico County, 5.25 MGD current and 25 MGD ultimate contractual capacity; wastewater agreements with Henrico and Richmond; ~462,000 GPD in legacy private capacity reservations, Capital One’s 150,000 GPD largest.

[11] Goochland County news flash, “Goochland County Board of Supervisors Vote to Approve Technology Overlay District as Amended,” November 7, 2025: the January 2024 special meeting setting the board’s priorities, economic development among them; first community presentation July 7, 2025; Vaughters’ motion to approve the TOD with amendments “increasing the requirements to minimize sound from generators,” seconded by Spoonhower; both ordinances adopted 4-1, Lyle opposed.

[12] Richmond BizSense, “Goochland supervisors approve tech overlay district in 4-1 vote after marathon meeting,” November 10, 2025: 4-1 votes on both ordinances; ~350 attendees; 4+ hours of comment; no supporting speakers; Lyle deferral motion to July 2026 and TOD West removal motion, each dying without a second; Vaughters motion; staff amendments presented the night of the vote including the Sec. 15-448.B(3) clarification; supervisor quotations; TOD West family ownership.

[13] Goochland County news release, FY2020 budget (adopted April 2019): creation of the data center business personal property classification at $0.40 per $100 “to promote further investment in this market sector.” The date of the subsequent move to $0.44 is not pinned down in available sources.

[14] Louisa County Code §§ 86-330 through 86-334 (Technology Overlay District), Municode, codified through Ord. 2026-6 (March 16, 2026): purpose, establishment (125 contiguous acres minimum, 115kV proximity, 1%/3,266-acre cap), design standards (200-ft residential and 300-ft agricultural buffers; § 86-332(e), “Daytime Level: 65dB. Nighttime Level: 60dB.”), and uses. The editor’s note to § 86-333 records Ord. 2024-11 (August 5, 2024) retitling the section from “Permitted uses—Generally,” marking the conversion of principal uses from by-right to conditional use permit. Prince William County Code §§ 32-509.01 through 32-509.03 (Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District), Municode, read November 9, 2026: the district “was created for the purpose of promoting development of data centers within areas of the County where there is existing infrastructure”; “Data centers shall be permitted by right in the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District”; history note “(Ord. No. 16-21, Attch., 5-17-16).” Sec. 32-509.02(1), as quoted in the Prince William Board of County Supervisors’ DPA2026-00006 packet of September 22, 2026: the district may be established “on lands in proximity to high voltage transmission lines of 115kv or more.”

[15] The Central Virginian, “County OKs tech overlay districts,” April 2023: Ordinance 2023-6 adopted April 3, 2023 by a 6-1 vote, Cuckoo District Supervisor Willie Gentry dissenting.

[16] Louisa County news release, August 2023: $11 billion Amazon Web Services two-campus commitment within the Technology Overlay District, announced August 30, 2023, 149 days after the district’s adoption.

[17] Tommy N. Turner, Case Study: Louisa County — The Overlay, the Amazon Retreat, and the $17 Billion Bet, 10.5281/zenodo.20673455 (companion study in this series): the AWS announcement of August 30, 2023, 149 days after the TOD’s adoption; the August 2024 amendment converting the district’s uses to conditional use permits; the board’s unanimous January 20, 2026 vote directing the planning

commission to consider removing about 2,600 acres, and the commission's pulling of the hearing on February 12 and April 9, 2026.

[18] Engage Louisa (Tammy Purcell), 2024-2026 coverage: 2024 district shrinkage; January 2026 AWS purchase of ~1,925 acres including the Fisher Chewning tract for $72.45 million; Supervisor Duane Adams's push to remove ~2,600 acres from the district; planning commission's 7-0 February 12, 2026 vote pulling the rollback hearing from its agenda. See also The Central Virginian, "County defers decision on tech overlay district removal." Louisa County Planning Commission minutes, April 9, 2026: the 5-2 vote removing the hearing from the agenda. Louisa County Board of Supervisors minutes and agendas through November 2, 2026, and Planning Commission minutes and agendas posted through November 12, 2026 (Louisa County CivicClerk portal), read November 9, 2026: no item on the removal.

[19] Virginia Mercury, "Amazon pulls Louisa County data center proposal after strong resistance," July 28, 2025: AWS withdrawal of the third-campus CUP (up to 7.2M sq ft on the ~1,400-acre Fisher Chewning tract).

[20] Richmond BizSense, "As lawsuit hearing looms, Goochland residents keep up fight against controversial tech overlay district," May 20, 2026: district acreage (~4,400 total, ~3,500 in West Creek under Pruitt Associates control); complaint allegations ("wholly inadequate," "confusingly defective," adopted version "differed materially" from late-October notices); Haas quotations; county responsive-pleading characterizations; ~300-resident donor base.

[21] Goochland County, Board of Supervisors Approved TOD Ordinance, November 6, 2025 (CP-2025-00002; ZOA-2025-00001), goochlandva.us DocumentCenter: Article 27.A, Secs. 15-448 through 15-450; siting criteria (100 contiguous acres, 115kV proximity); use table (Sec. 15-450) including data centers by right except TOD West, and utility generating stations (natural gas peaking plants and small modular nuclear reactor facilities under 300 MWe) by CUP; development standards (Sec. 15-449): 300-ft/500-ft setbacks, 250-ft vegetated buffers, 55 dBA/65 dBC, generator testing and screening requirements, Tier 4 diesel, 120-ft height cap with 80-ft adjacency ceiling, mandatory public water and sewer; planning commission procedural recital (hearings September 18 and 25, 2025; 3-2 recommendation); Sec. 15-448.B(3); enabling authority citations including Va. Code § 15.2-2204.

[22] Goochland County, Ordinance No. 6453 (Technology Zone), adopted November 6, 2025, goochlandva.us DocumentCenter: Secs. 8-100 through 8-106 under Va. Code § 58.1-3850; up to 75% building permit fee and 100% utility connection fee reimbursement for up to ten years; qualification thresholds; clawback (Sec. 8-106); Tuckahoe Creek surtax preserved (Sec. 8-105); recital

deferring the October 7, 2025 hearing to November 6 for tandem consideration; printed vote block recording the 4-1 vote, Christy seconding; boilerplate recital placing the meeting in the Goochland County Administration Building.

[23] Cardinal News (Dwayne Yancey, column), “Goochland County will help us gauge the public acceptance of the next generation of nuclear reactors,” September 23, 2025: April Wade of the Virginia Nuclear Energy Consortium knew of no other locality in Virginia with a zoning ordinance specifically aimed at allowing SMRs; Surry County allows SMRs through a special permit.

[24] Goochland County, “2026 Ordinance Update” page, goochlandva.us/1490, read October 24 and November 9, 2026: the two proposed amendments (“Prohibiting Data Centers Outside of the TOD”; “Aligning the ordinance with new state law on high energy use facilities; Re-adopting and re-affirming the Technology Overlay District”); the county’s description of Va. Code § 15.2-2209.5; “M1 M2 Pre-Application” and “TOD Re-Adoption Pre-Application,” both filed August 24, 2026; community meeting of August 27, 2026, and the postponement of a second; the October 27, 2026 update scheduling a community meeting on the drafts for November 10, 2026, at Goochland High School; the board’s October 6, 2026 resolution extending the Planning Commission’s time to January 22, 2027; “Nothing is decided yet.” WTVR CBS 6, September 2, 2026: the board’s Tuesday vote to refer the proposed prohibition to the Planning Commission, not a final approval; no tally reported.

[25] Tommy N. Turner, Case Study: Chesterfield County — The $0.24 Rate, the Thirty-Year Lock, and the Two-Corridor County, 10.5281/zenodo.20672436 (companion study in this series): ZOMod, Ordinance No. 2025-18, adopted September 17, 2025, effective January 1, 2026, Sec. 19.2-32 data center use standards (60 dBA at the property line; 200-foot setback from residential or agricultural property; generator testing 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. weekdays; conditional use in the EC and EG districts); Tract’s 744-acre data center park at 16100 Branders Bridge Road, which the Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend for denial in June 2025 and which Tract withdrew on July 2, 2025.

[26] Hanover row: companion Hanover study (10.5281/zenodo.20672048), Part Five: Proffered Condition 13(a) of April 30, 2026 (57 dBA day, 52 night; 73 dBC day, 68 night), tightened May 21 to 50 dBA at night; 300-foot setback; Tier IV generators tested 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. weekdays; an M-1 receiving limit of 77 dBA under the county ordinance. Prince William and Loudoun rows: as tabled in the same study from the Prince William Sustainability Commission’s draft recommendations (March 2025) and Loudoun ZOAM-2024-0001 (March 2025); those sources were not read for this study. Prince William’s adopted amendment:

companion Prince William study, v3.2 (10.5281/zenodo.20673498), DPA2026-00006, Ord. No. 26-67, September 22, 2026.

[27] Richmond BizSense, “Goochland delays planning commission hearing on proposed tech overlay district,” August 7, 2025: County Administrator Jeremy Raley’s postponement of the August 21 hearing “after hearing public outcry”; Readers Branch (300+ homes); the original draft’s allowance of a data center under 80 feet within 50 feet of the subdivision.

[28] Richmond BizSense, “Goochland residents come out against proposed tech overlay district at commission meeting,” September 19, 2025: ~700 attendees at the September 8 community meeting; residents speaking “in the dozens” at the September 18 meeting; the 4-1 continuance; Mosaic at West Creek HOA “sacrifice zone” statement; “Chernobyl on the James”; West Creek tenant context.

[29] Richmond BizSense, “Proposed Goochland tech overlay district moves forward after planning commission thumbs-up,” September 26, 2025: September 25 vote 3-2 (McLaughlin, Cosby, Pituck for; Kowalski, Kemmerly against); Kemmerly’s motion attaching four recommended conditions; West Creek acreage and tenants.

[30] WRIC ABC 8, “Controversial high-tech development proposal narrowly advances in Goochland” (September 2025). The 3-2 vote and dates are confirmed by the adopted TOD ordinance’s recitals and the county TOD/TZ page.

[31] Goochland County news flash, October 21, 2025: revised ordinances and maps posted October 20 for public review ahead of the November 6 hearing, incorporating planning commission recommendations (no by-right energy generation; CUP for TOD West data centers; 55 dBA/65 dBC; 500-ft agricultural setback; 80-ft adjacency cap; mandatory public water; no residential street access); hearing noticed for Thursday, November 6, 2025, 6:30 p.m., Goochland High School auditorium; the October generator-mitigation menu language compared against the adopted mandate.

[32] Virginia Mercury, “Goochland approves tech overlay district after hours of resident backlash,” November 10, 2025: corridor geography; six-hour meeting; more than 80 residents of Goochland and surrounding counties speaking in opposition; “several changes were made to the original proposal”; characterization of Lyle’s motion as a one-year delay; Winfree and Spoonhower quotations; the “Tim Winfree” misnomer noted in Part Four.

[33] WTVR CBS 6, “Goochland County approves technology overlay district despite public opposition,” November 7, 2025 (A.J. Nwoko), read November 9, 2026: “dozens of public speakers voicing opposition”; Spoonhower and Lyle day-after quotations.

[34] Richmond BizSense, “Ahead of today’s Goochland tech zone vote, residents continue to express concerns,” November 6, 2025: Goochland Residents Alliance town hall of November 3, 2025 at Discovery United Methodist Church; attendees from Goochland, Henrico, and Hanover; Sierra Club Virginia chapter communications director Tim Cywinski’s presentation; Stephen Levet FOIA campaign and the 1,000+ email record.

[35] VPM News, “Goochland supervisors OK controversial data center district proposal” (slug: goochland-county-data-centers-tech-district-lyle-vaughters-levet), November 10, 2025: hearing past midnight at Goochland High School; Henrico supervisors Jody Rogish (Tuckahoe) and Misty Roundtree (Three Chopt) speaking against, with Roundtree’s “gift” quotation; Vaughters “cotton out of my ears” quotation; Lyle deferral quotation; Levet email figures; photo-caption mislabeling of Lyle as District 2 noted in Part Four.

[36] NBC12/WWBT, “Goochland County approves controversial data center plan,” November 7, 2025 (12onyourside.com), read October 24, 2026: a meeting of more than six hours that included three hours of public comment, with no speaker count given; Winfree and Lyle quotations.

[37] Goochland County, Board of Supervisors roster, goochlandva.us/158: Christy (D1), Spoonhower (D2), Winfree (D3), Vaughters (D4), Lyle (D5); leadership news flashes (Winfree chair 2025; Christy chair 2026).

[38] Neighbors For Change, “Goochland grapples with accusations of undisclosed data center contract” (fall 2025): Supervisor Lyle’s email, surfaced via resident FOIA request, asserting a landowner-developer contract for an eight-building, ~2-million-sq-ft data center campus contingent on TOD inclusion. Advocacy-site sourcing; the underlying documents are listed in Part Thirteen.

[39] Goochland County FAQ (TOD series), QID 522: county awareness of “discussions between a private developer and several landowners regarding a contract for a potential data center project on approximately 900+ acres near Mosaic and Richmond Country Club along Hockett Road (TOD West)”; the statement that the district “does not authorize or approve the construction or installation of a small modular reactor”; NRC/DEQ review requirements; SMR siting limits; TOD West CUP process (community meeting plus commission and board hearings).

[40] Goochland County, “Tuckahoe Technology Park” page, goochlandva.us/1480, read October 24, 2026: the county’s nondisclosure-agreement timeline (November 2023; August 2025; November 6 and 17, 2025; June 10 and June 17, 2026), with the three agreements posted at goochlandva.us DocumentCenter/View/13611

(2023, Economic Development Authority), 13616 (2025, Economic Development Authority) and 13617 (2025, County).

[41] Va. Code § 15.2-2204 (Advertisement of plans, ordinances, etc.), law.lis.virginia.gov: read October 24, 2026: advertisement by reference identifying where copies may be examined; two published notices (first no more than 28 days, second no less than five days before the meeting); written notice to the owner of each parcel involved, and to abutting and across-the-street owners where 25 or fewer parcels are involved (boundary description plus map link permitted above 100 parcels); amending acts listed through 2025 Va. Acts chs. 52, 171; the inadvertent-failure savings clause and the actual-notice/participation waiver provision; subsection E's 30-day limitations period for advertisement-based challenges.

[42] WTVR CBS 6, "Goochland data center lawsuit" feature, April 9, 2026: Haas's residence adjacent to TOD-permitted land; the demurrer pending; the "David and Goliath" quotation.

[43] Richmond BizSense, "Judge rejects county's full 8,500-page filing in Goochland TOD lawsuit," May 27, 2026 (reporting the Tuesday, May 26 hearing): Judge Timothy K. Sanner's denial of the county's motion to admit the full legislative record; Strother's "dump" argument and the post-adoption Virginia Mercury article example; Finney's legislative-record argument; the pared-down set ordered, with the county free to return after reviewing the plaintiffs' theory; the withdrawn Count VIII (arbitrary and capricious) with Strother and Raley quotations; the October 20, 2026 demurrer setting; plaintiff counsel and informal-adviser identifications.

[44] Goochland County DocumentCenter, linked from goochlandva.us/1408, read November 9, 2026: "Technology Overlay District Lawsuit" (complaint, scanned image without machine-readable text, View/13044); "Defendants' Responsive Pleading" (66 pages, View/13045), captioned Cynthia Haas, et al. v. Board of Supervisors of Goochland County, Virginia, et al., Case No. CL25-1270, describing the nine counts (¶¶ 44, 68, 74-75, 77, 85, 100, 112, 137, 162); and Plaintiffs' Brief in Opposition to Defendants' Demurrers (View/13926), with a cover letter to the clerk dated July 24, 2026, recording the nonsuit of Count VIII under Va. Code § 8.01-380 and the July 2, 2026 withdrawal of the Digital Gateway petition for appeal to the Supreme Court of Virginia.

[45] Goochland on my mind (civic blog), "TOD pretrial motions," May 2026: nine-count structure; relief sought (declaration of nullity, public-hearing compliance, legal fees); hearing account consistent with BizSense; demurrer hearing October 20, 2026, 9:30 a.m. (the county's August 2026 update gives 9:00 a.m.; note 49).

[46] Glazebrook v. Board of Supervisors of Spotsylvania County, 266 Va. 550, 587 S.E.2d 589 (2003), as described in the Court of Appeals' Digital Gateway opinion of March 31, 2026: an ordinance whose advertisement lacked the descriptive summary then required was void ab initio, and the Court enforced subsection A without regard to the plaintiffs' actual notice. The 2003 opinion itself was not retrieved for this study (Part Thirteen).

[47] Court of Appeals of Virginia, Board of County Supervisors of Prince William County v. Oak Valley Homeowners Association, Inc., Record No. 1590-25-4, with Record Nos. 1584-25-4 and 1592-25-4, opinion by Judge Raphael, March 31, 2026: pp. 29-30 and n.21 (the 2023 amendments, 2023 Va. Acts chs. 506, 507, eliminating the descriptive-summary requirement and keeping the where-to-review requirement; the removal of the "descriptive summary" noted again later in the opinion); Part III, p. 40 (the actual-notice waiver in subsection B "does not excuse advertising deficiencies under subsection A"); its account of Glazebrook, 266 Va. at 554-557.

[48] Tommy N. Turner, Case Study: Prince William County — Governance Capture, the Revolving Door, and the Democratic Correction, v3.2, October 2026, 10.5281/zenodo.20673498: the July 2, 2026 notice by GW Acquisition Co., LLC and GW Acquisition Co. I, LLC withdrawing their petition to the Supreme Court of Virginia, after which the judgment voiding the Digital Gateway rezonings took full effect.

[49] Goochland County, "Technology Overlay District & Technology Zone" page, goochlandva.us/1408, read October 24 and November 9, 2026: June 2026 update (modified legislative record filed June 30, 2026); August 2026 update (both parties' briefs filed; hearing scheduled October 20, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.); October 21, 2026 update (a hearing of almost three hours on the county's demurrer; "This now leaves only 3 of the 9 original claims for consideration by the Court"; no ruling at the hearing; a written opinion to follow, no timeframe given); no later update as of November 9, 2026. The page is one party's account of its own case. Richmond BizSense, "Goochland data center drama still lingers as angry residents gather, judge weighs decision on TOD lawsuit dismissal," October 22, 2026: plaintiffs' counsel asked "to leave the first three counts, which allege that the county violated advertisement, notice and public hearing requirements regarding the TOD, as well as claims related to a lack of uniformity among the TOD regulations and a violation of the Goochland County zoning ordinance"; the judge took the demurrer under advisement. Goochland on my mind, November 2026 posts, read November 9, 2026: no ruling reported.

[50] Richmond BizSense, “Tuckahoe Tech Park data center campus planned on 900-acre tract in Goochland,” June 11, 2026: Tract’s initial CUP application filed June 10, 2026; thirteen parcels, ~900 acres, Haddock/Stern/Arenstein ownership, under contract; seven development areas, twelve buildings, 60-80 ft heights, 500-ft setbacks; $3 billion construction over 20 years; $400M real property and $600M+ personal property tax projections; 350 permanent jobs; TCSD service extended along Hockett Road; no megawatt figure disclosed.

[51] Goochland County, “Tuckahoe Technology Park” page, goochlandva.us/1480, read October 24 and November 9, 2026: formal application received August 5, 2026, case CU-2026-00014; Completeness Letter #1, August 20, 2026; the county’s list of additional documentation; the September 1, 2026 update; “The CUP process generally takes 90 to 120 days”; no Planning Commission or Board hearing date listed. Goochland Planning Commission, regular meeting agenda for October 26, 2026, as posted (goochlandcova.portal.civicclerk.com), read October 24, 2026: four public hearings, none on CU-2026-00014. Richmond BizSense, “Formal permit application filed for Tuckahoe Tech Park data center campus in Goochland,” August 11, 2026. Tract Management Company, LP, “Data centers future tax generation analysis, Goochland County, Virginia,” “Updated – July 2026,” posted on the project page (DocumentCenter/View/13854): “Total MW Planned 900 MW”; “Number of buildings 9”; “Total building area (sq. ft.) 2,340,000”; over twenty years, “Real property (0.53%) $446m” and “Business personal property (0.44%) $639m.” WTVR CBS 6, July 24, 2026: Tract’s community meeting at Goochland High School on Thursday, July 23, 2026.

[52] WTVR CBS 6, “Goochland County residents voice concerns over proposed data center and nuclear reactor development,” September 8, 2025; companion NBC12 coverage September 4-26, 2025: the summer amendment adding small modular nuclear reactor facility, natural gas peaking plant, and utility generating station definitions to the draft.

[53] Henrico Citizen, September 2025: county administrator’s hypothetical SMR siting comment (north of I-64, near the landfill and rock quarry); ~300 MWe ordinance cap. Paywalled; flagged secondary.

[54] Utility Dive and VPM News coverage, 2024-2025: Dominion Energy’s SMR development activity at North Anna (Louisa County), including the RFP for SMR designs and the Amazon nuclear partnership. No Dominion filing or statement read for this study connects an SMR to any Goochland site.

[55] Tommy N. Turner, Case Study: Hanover County — Mountain Road, Tract, and the Search for Leverage, 10.5281/zenodo.20672048 (companion study in this series; v2.0, June 2026, and v3.0, September 2026): the Mountain Road proffer

record and 4-3 rejection of May 27, 2026; Hanover's $0.45 rate (2023), the June 24, 2026 hearing on a rate of up to $3.00, and, from the adopted minutes (v3.0), the board's 7-0 adoption of $0.45 for calendar year 2026 with referral of the rate to the Finance Committee for the FY2028 budget process; the Dominion 2024 IRP figures including approximately 1.3 GW of small modular nuclear capacity through the late 2030s; the GS-5 rate class; the regional diffusion passage discussed in Part Eleven of this study. Hanover County, Mountain Road staff report: a site of "approximately 427 acres"; "the proposed development is expected to use 90% of existing water supply capacity within the Elmont Pressure Zone."

[56] Richmond BizSense, "HCA sells long-closed emergency center on 60 acres in Goochland for $11M," October 13, 2025: ~57 acres at 12720 Tuckahoe Creek Parkway; buyer entity tied to Rob Chesson; HCA paid $10.5M for the land in 2006.

[57] Thalhimer announcement; GlobeNewswire, January 8, 2026; Richmond BizSense, January 22, 2026: Summit Real Estate Group/Loci Capital purchase of 23.18 acres in West Creek Business Park from Brandywine Realty Trust for $4.6 million (October 2025); 221,231-sq-ft speculative West Creek Commerce Center, ground broken January 2026.

[58] Richmond BizSense, "Goochland board OKs West Creek parcel rezoning despite neighbors' claims of landlocking," December 5, 2024.

[59] Goochland County Commissioner of the Revenue, tax rate schedule, goochlandva.us/592: Real Estate $0.53; TCSD ad valorem $0.32; Personal Property and Business Personal Property $3.75; Machinery & Tools $1.00; Business Personal Property for Data Centers $0.44. Discount arithmetic: 1 − (0.44 ÷ 3.75) = 88.3%.

[60] Goochland County, Resolution 6636 (CY2026 tax rates), adopted April 14, 2026: "$0.44 per $100 assessed valuation — Business Personal Property for Data Centers." The county's published rate schedule also gives $0.44.

[61] Goochland County Department of Economic Development, goochlandforbusiness.com/170/Taxes, read November 9, 2026: "Tax Effective Rate Per $100 of Assessed Value Business Personal Property For Data Centers $0.26." The page does not state how the effective rate is derived.

[62] Rate table sources: Loudoun FY2027 budget adoption news flash, April 7, 2026 ($4.15 general PP); Fairfax County EDA tax facts, September 2025 ($4.57 BTPP, accelerated computer-equipment depreciation to a 2% floor); Prince William FY2027 budget adoption, April 21, 2026 ($4.50 data center computer equipment, from $4.15; the county's FY2027 public-hearing notice lists the same $4.15 and $4.50 for programmable computer equipment employed in a trade or business);

Henrico FY2025-26 budget coverage, Richmond BizSense February 26, 2025, and corrected BizSense reporting April 27, 2026 ($2.60, from $0.40); henrico.gov approved tax rates and revenue division pages, read November 9, 2026 ($2.60); Louisa: the companion Louisa study ($1.25 data center equipment class adopted September 18, 2023; $1.90 business personal property; FY2027 levies of April 27, 2026); New Kent Commissioner of the Revenue 2026 schedule ($3.75 TPP, no class); Orange County proposed FY2026 rate schedule ($1.25); Spotsylvania official rate page ($1.25, class effective January 1, 2020) and Fredericksburg Free Press, February 25, 2026 (SUP requirement and advertised-rate action, outcome unconfirmed); Caroline County business taxes page ($3.50 BPP/M&T; countywide technology zone rebates); Chesterfield: the companion Chesterfield study ($0.24 classification rate, April 2019) and Richmond BizSense, June 27, 2025 (30-year rate locks in incentive agreements).

[63] Richmond BizSense, “Hanover supervisors to consider raising tax rate on data center equipment,” April 27, 2026 (corrected): Hanover’s $0.45 rate created in 2023; the rate’s absence from the FY2027 budget adopted April 8, 2026, which the article calls a removal; a June 24, 2026 public hearing at up to $3.00 (the companion Hanover study records from the minutes that the rate is set by calendar-year resolution and that the budget’s omission was not a repeal); and Henrico’s current $2.60 rate.

[64] Goochland County, County Administrator’s Proposed FY27 Budget presentation, February 17, 2026: General Fund $107.8 million proposed (+3.7% over the FY2026 GF of $103,940,253 on a transfers-inclusive basis; the FY2026 county-operations GF figure of $65.7 million is definitionally narrower); Personal Property and Business Equipment revenue line essentially flat at $21.448 million (FY2026: $21.5 million); no data center revenue line; $16,951,055 bond-funded Ridgefield Booster Pump Station.

[65] Richmond BizSense, “Goochland earmarks $250K to oppose $1B Valley Link transmission project,” April 20, 2026; Goochland County news release and Valley Link project page; Cardinal News, March 26, 2026: $1 billion, 115-mile transmission line (Joshua Falls to Yeat) crossing Goochland; county opposition resolution April 7, 2026; a preferred route filing with the SCC then expected around September 2026. Valley Link said in June 2026 that it would file its certificate application with the SCC in the fall; as of October 7, 2026, the SCC’s case index showed no certificate case for the line (companion Orange County study, v3.1, endnote 54, 10.5281/zenodo.20672496).

[66] Goochland County FAQ (TOD series), QID 519: developers bear water/sewer connection and upgrade costs.

[67] Dominion Energy, West Creek project page (dominionenergy.com/westcreek): new substation and double-circuit 230kV line “to ease the load on the local distribution network serving Goochland and Henrico counties and to support recently announced development projects”; announcement letter November 2025; community meeting December 4, 2025 (Residence Inn Short Pump); SCC application filed January 28, 2026, Case No. PUR-2026-00009; public comment deadline June 9, 2026; public witness and evidentiary hearings June 16, 2026.

[68] Report of D. Mathias Roussy, Jr., Chief Hearing Examiner, Case No. PUR-2026-00009, July 14, 2026: p. 2 and n.3 (the application’s project description, citing Ex. 2 (Application) at 2-3); p. 9 and n.43 (the routing study, citing Ex. 4 (Routing Study) at Appendix B, Figure 3.1-3); p. 28 and nn.182-183 (Staff witness Jay-Ar Llamido, citing Ex. 24 (Staff Report) at 4-5 and 5); p. 42, n.264 (citing Ex. 2 (Appendix) at 13-14). The application and routing study are cited as the report cites them.

[69] VPM News, “State regulators OK Dominion project near Hallsley area of Chesterfield,” February 9, 2026, updated February 22, 2026, read November 9, 2026: the SCC approved the shortest route, along the western edge of the Hallsley subdivision, for a project “aimed in part to power future data centers in western Chesterfield County.”

[70] Virginia State Corporation Commission, Case No. PUR-2026-00009, docket read October 24 and November 9, 2026 (scc.virginia.gov/docketsearch, case 146726): case summary (“Status: Under Appeal”; disposition “Approved,” September 10, 2026); Report of D. Mathias Roussy, Jr., Chief Hearing Examiner, July 14, 2026; Final Order, September 10, 2026 (DocID 392087), pp. 1-3 (project, purpose, routes, cost), 5-6 (findings adopted), 8-9 (ordering paragraphs 3, 5 and 8); Notice of Appeal of Asgard Broad Street Properties I LLC to the Supreme Court of Virginia under Rule 5:21(a)(3), filed October 9, 2026 (DocID 392785), the latest filing listed as of November 9, 2026.

[71] Virginia State Corporation Commission, Case No. PUR-2026-00009, Exhibit 38, Rebuttal Testimony of Dominic J. Minor on behalf of Virginia Electric and Power Company, filed May 29, 2026, as corrected in proceeding, admitted June 16, 2026 (DocID 390225), public version, pp. 5-7, read on the Commission’s docket October 24, 2026. The developer’s load letter the testimony refers to was produced to Staff under the Hearing Examiner’s protective ruling of March 17, 2026 and is not in the public exhibit. Richmond Times-Dispatch, August 6, 2026 (Sean Jones). Richmond BizSense, “Google revealed as user for potential data center campus in Goochland’s West Creek,” October 28, 2026, updated October 30, 2026: a county news release naming Google; Google’s confirmation of its interest; due diligence

on the property, in BizSense's account; "As of now, Google has submitted no plans, Goochland County Administrator Jeremy Raley said in an email Wednesday"; a roughly 1,000-acre site in West Creek Business Park, owned by an entity tied to Pruitt Associates and Riverstone Group, that would bisect Route 288 north of Patterson Avenue; the customer's four executed ELOAs in the Commission record; the site's by-right status ("would be a by-right use and would not need to go through the public hearing process"); and, from the county's release, the nondisclosure agreement of January 10, 2024, the meeting of January 30, 2024, the VEDP report that Google "was not interested and was not moving forward," and Google's re-engagement after the TOD's adoption (the last not tied to the release in the article). WTVR CBS 6, "Google eyeing data center campus in Goochland's West Creek," October 28, 2026.

[72] Piedmont Environmental Council, Virginia Data Center Reform Coalition member list (pecva.org): Sierra Club Virginia Chapter listed; no Goochland member group listed as of November 9, 2026; Henrico Conservation Action Network the coalition's only Richmond-area locality member.

[73] Henrico County, Data Center Guidelines Comprehensive Plan Amendment, adopted June 10, 2025 (henrico.gov); Richmond BizSense, May 15, 2025; VPM News, May 19, 2025: provisional use permits for new stand-alone data centers countywide, 500-ft residential setbacks, generator-testing limits, noise studies, and the White Oak Technology Park overlay concentrating data centers in Varina. Treated at length in the companion Henrico case study.

[74] Richmond BizSense, "Following Goochland's lead, New Kent County mulling data center-centric tech overlay district," February 19, 2026: ~1,800 gross/1,260 net acres on the Route 33 corridor at Eltham Road (1.3% of county land); majority ownership by a Jonathan Kinney-tied entity; Dewberry study (April 2025); staff visits to Louisa and Culpeper (January 2026); February 17 planning commission presentation and February 24 board work session; draft standards (administrative CUP, no SMR/peaker category, 200-ft setbacks, 85-ft height cap including rooftop equipment, 65/60 dBA, water use analysis); Airaghi quotations; contemplated timeline (community meetings from March; commission hearing May or June; board vote June or July).

[75] New Kent County news flash, February 20, 2026; staff TOD presentation (newkent-va.us DocumentCenter); New Kent County Planning page, accessed June 12, 2026, still labeling the instrument "(Draft) Technology Overlay District" with no public hearing scheduled.

[76] New Kent–Charles City Chronicle, "Consideration for development of Technology Overlay District targets data center development," March 8, 2026:

Commissioner Patricia Townsend’s exchange with community development director Josh Airaghi on the no-further-hearings feature.

[77] Richmond BizSense (Jackie DiBartolomeo), July 15, 2026, reporting the board’s Monday, July 13, 2026 meeting: the overlay directive, Supervisor Amy Pearson’s motion, the 3-2 Eltham Business Park rezoning, and the direction to draft a data center ordinance. New Kent County Board of Supervisors, Work Session, September 29, 2026: Action Agenda, item 3.e (Resolution R-41-26; members polled, Evelyn, Moyer and Pearson nay, Stiers and Stewart aye; “The motion failed.”), items 3.f and 3.g; agenda packet of the same date (text of R-41-26); meeting video, newkentcountyva YouTube channel, auto-generated transcript at about 1:07:50 (Community Development Director Joshua Airaghi on holding public hearings “until February at the earliest”). The county’s record of July 13, 2026 was not read for this study (Part Thirteen); the September 29, 2026 packet records the July 13 direction to “discontinue development of the previously proposed Technology Overlay District.” New Kent County Board of Supervisors, regular meeting of October 13, 2026, Action Agenda: no data center item; a consent item adding “a Joint Work Session Meeting with the Planning Commission at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 8, 2026.”

This case study draws on Goochland County ordinances and county records, Goochland County Circuit Court coverage, Virginia Code and case law, State Corporation Commission filings, census and budget data, and sustained local and regional news coverage from 2019 through November 9, 2026. It supersedes v1.1 (October 2026). It is a companion to What Virginia Is Spending, What Virginia Is Getting: The Commonwealth Data Center Reference (v5.5, November 2026), which covers the statewide fiscal, ratepayer, and employment picture in detail.