

Data Center Development Benefits

Unlocking the economic potential of data centers in Clinton, Iowa.



Data Center Development Explained

Data centers are critical infrastructure facilities that support the modern digital economy. They power financial systems, manufacturing automation, healthcare platforms, logistics networks, and cloud-based services used by businesses and residents every day. If you think of a data center serving as a utility, just like running water, a data center exists to ensure all of your digital and online resources remain accessible to an end user. From AI-driven online gaming, social media, and digital banking, the storage of information is critical to the safety and security of our data. In today's world, our modern conveniences rely on the existence of data centers.

Significant Property Tax Base Expansion

To allow for continued improvements and the retention of basic services, the City of Clinton and Clinton County must investigate opportunities to diversify its stream of property tax revenue. We cannot depend solely on the development of residential property to offset the increased costs of managing municipal and county government.

Data centers represent some of the highest capital investments per acre of any industrial use. These facilities often generate hundreds of millions of dollars in taxable improvements, supporting schools, public safety, infrastructure, and local government services while helping stabilize property tax rates for residents.

Construction Phase Job Creation

Multi-year construction creates hundreds of temporary jobs across skilled trades, engineering, and support services. Local contractors, hotels, restaurants, and suppliers benefit from increased activity.

Permanent High-Quality Employment

Operational data centers provide long-term technical positions with competitive wages, strong benefits, and ongoing training. These roles align well with electrical, mechanical, and industrial skill sets.

Long-Term Community Investment

Once built, data centers typically operate for 30–50+ years, providing predictable tax revenue and ongoing reinvestment in equipment and infrastructure.

Community Partnership

Developers commonly support Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) education, workforce training, community organizations, and local emergency services, serving as long-term corporate partners.

Infrastructure Advantages

Data center projects often include upgrades to electric systems, fiber connectivity, and road infrastructure. These improvements can strengthen regional capacity and support future economic development opportunities.



Power Usage

Facilities fund necessary utility upgrades and operate under strict coordination with providers. Fee schedules and timelines are in place to ensure zero interruptions in residential and commercial electric supply.

Land Use & Appearance

Data centers are low-traffic, quiet facilities with modern architectural standards. Much like a warehousing facility, data centers are simply large buildings with the capacity to store digital information. The current zoning of M3 supports the development of a data center in Clinton.

Water Use

Modern systems emphasize efficiency and are fully regulated through local permitting. A strong percentage of water used in the cooling process is recirculated, reducing the amount of water released through the municipal sewer system.

Incentives

Any incentives are performance-based and designed to generate community value. This includes up front investment by the developer in support of infrastructure improvements such as utility extensions and road construction. All of which benefit the community and its residents.

Community FAQ

This Frequently Asked Questions section of the report is intended to provide clear, factual information about a proposed data center development and how it may benefit the Clinton County community.

What is a data center?

A data center is a secure facility that houses computer servers and networking equipment. These systems support everyday AI-driven services such as online banking, medical records, manufacturing systems, emergency communications, cloud storage, and business operations.

Why are data centers important?

Data centers are essential infrastructure in today's digital economy. They support local and national businesses, strengthen technology reliability, and help communities participate in long-term economic growth.



Data centers provide several community benefits, including:

- Exciting new property tax revenue that helps our schools & public safety
- Hundreds of construction jobs created during the multi-year building phase
- Permanent, high-quality technical and operations jobs for our community
- Long-term private investments that can benefit us for 30–50 years - Improvements to our infrastructure, including new local investments to support community projects and capital improvements

How many jobs are created?

While data centers do not employ large numbers of permanent staff, they generate substantial construction employment and provide long-term technical positions for contractors in a variety of disciplines.

Will the facility create noise, traffic, or pollution?

Data centers generate minimal daily traffic, have no smokestacks or emissions, and operate quietly. Compared to many industrial uses, they are among the lowest-impact facilities. Noise levels are monitored to ensure compliance with limits.

What will the building look like?

Modern data centers use professional architectural design, landscaping, setbacks, and screening. Local zoning and development standards guide appearance and site layout.

Will the data center increase my property taxes?

No. A data center expands the local tax base, which can help stabilize or reduce the tax burden on existing residents and businesses by spreading costs across more taxable value.

What about water usage?

Many modern data centers use highly efficient cooling systems, including air-cooled or closed-loop designs. Water use is regulated, permitted, and continuously monitored by local authorities.

Will the facility use large amounts of electricity?

Data centers do require significant power, but all usage is planned in coordination with the local electric provider. Developers fund necessary infrastructure upgrades and do not reduce service capacity for residents.

Will the developer be involved in the community?

Many data center developers actively support the communities where they operate through workforce partnerships, STEM education, nonprofit support, and collaboration with local emergency services.

Data Center Development – Myths vs. Facts

MYTH: Data centers don't benefit the community.

FACT: Data centers generate significant long-term property tax revenue that supports schools, public safety, infrastructure, and local government services for decades.

MYTH: They use too much electricity.

FACT: Power needs are planned years in advance with the electric provider. Developers fund necessary upgrades and do not reduce service reliability for residents.

MYTH: They don't create jobs.

FACT: While permanent staffing is limited, data centers create hundreds of construction jobs and provide long-term technical positions with competitive wages and benefits.

MYTH: Residents will pay higher taxes.

FACT: A data center expands the tax base, helping stabilize or reduce the tax burden on existing residents and businesses.

MYTH: The community gives away too much through incentives.

FACT: Any incentives are performance-based and time-limited. Even with incentives, data centers typically generate substantial long-term net tax revenue.

MYTH: The company could leave at any time.

FACT: Data centers involve massive infrastructure investment and are designed to operate for 30–50+ years, making relocation extremely unlikely.

MYTH: The developer won't be involved locally.

FACT: Many developers actively support local communities through STEM education, workforce partnerships, nonprofit involvement, and emergency services coordination.

MYTH: They create noise, pollution, or heavy traffic.

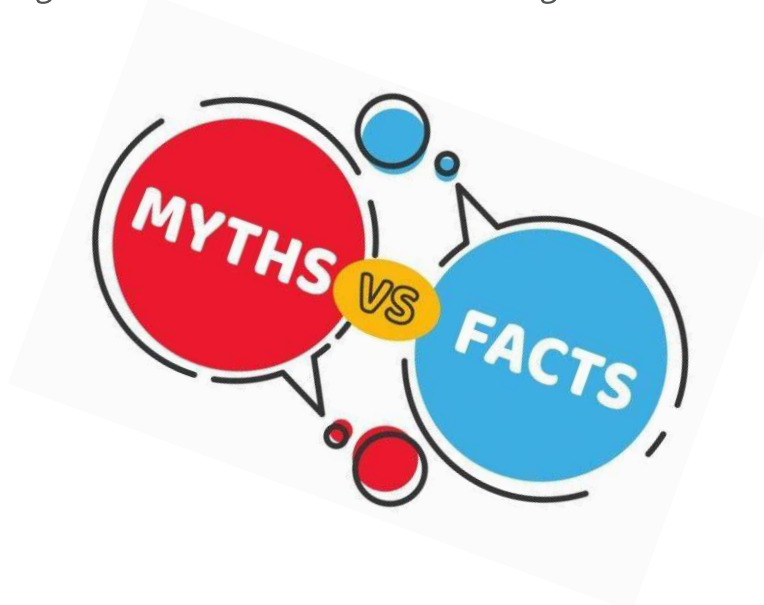
FACT: Data centers are quiet facilities with minimal daily traffic and no smokestacks, emissions, or outdoor industrial activity.

MYTH: The buildings will look unattractive.

FACT: Modern facilities follow architectural standards and include landscaping, setbacks, and screening required through local zoning and site review.

MYTH: They waste large amounts of water.

FACT: Modern data centers use highly efficient cooling systems, often air-cooled or closed-loop, with regulated and monitored water usage.





When thoughtfully planned, data center development provides long-term financial stability, infrastructure investment, and participation in the modern digital economy for Clinton County.

“This type of investment reflects the evolution of today’s economy. By attracting a data center, Clinton is not only expanding its tax base, but also reinforcing its role as a forward-looking community ready to support advanced infrastructure, technology-driven growth, and long-term private investment.”

— Andy Sokolovich, President & CEO, Grow Clinton

Appendix A: Resource Documentation for Data Center Development Claims

This appendix provides authoritative sources and documentation supporting the information presented in the Clinton, Iowa, data center development benefits report. Resources are organized by topic area with direct links to source materials.

Economic Impact and Tax Revenue

Property Tax Revenue Generation

Loudoun County, Virginia Case Study

Loudoun County's data center industry now contributes an estimated \$890 million annually in tax revenue, nearly matching the county's entire operating budget of \$940 million[1]. Data centers are expected to generate nearly half of the county's property tax revenues in fiscal year 2026[2].

- Source: Wyandotte Economic Development Council (March 2025)
- URL: <https://www.wyedc.org/media/p/item/61886/data-centers-provide-communities-with-increased-tax-revenue>
- Source: Nuveen Municipal Bond Analysis (August 2025)
- URL: <https://www.nuveen.com/en-us/insights/municipal-bond-investing/data-centers-impact-muni-issuers-risk-and-reward>

Tax Revenue Efficiency

For every dollar of tax revenue received from data centers, Loudoun County spends just \$0.04 to support them, compared to \$0.25 for traditional businesses[1].

- Source: Wyandotte Economic Development Council (March 2025)
- URL: <https://www.wyedc.org/media/p/item/61886/data-centers-provide-communities-with-increased-tax-revenue>

National Tax Revenue Analysis

A comprehensive economic impact study found that data center construction contributes \$66.6 million in state tax collections and \$67.5 million to local governments per typical project. Construction activities create 45,367 temporary jobs and generate \$176.8 million in combined state and local tax revenue[3].

- Source: Consumer Energy Alliance - Economic Benefits of Data Centers (December 2025)
- URL: <https://consumerenergyalliance.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/Economic-Impact-of-Data-Centers.pdf>

Highest Tax Revenue Per Acre

Data centers yield the highest tax revenue per acre among industrial uses, with low demands on public services, such as limited school enrollments[4].

- Source: Consumer Energy Alliance - Data Center Toolkit (October 2025)
- URL: https://consumerenergyalliance.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/CEA-FL_Data-Center-Toolkit.pdf

Capital Investment Benchmarks

Investment Cost per Megawatt

Investing in data centers requires significant capital, with expenditures typically averaging \$10 million per megawatt. Advanced facilities may cost more than \$20 million per megawatt[5]. A 100-megawatt data center typically requires capital expenditures ranging from \$700 million to \$1.2 billion[5].

- Source: BlueCap Economic Advisors (July 2025)
- URL: <https://www.bluecapeconomicadvisors.com/post/cost-data-center>

Land Acquisition Costs

The weighted-average cost of data center land through October 2024 was \$5.59 per square foot, or \$244,000 per acre. In 2024, the average parcel spanned 224 acres—a

144% increase since 2022, largely driven by developers looking to develop multi-building campuses[6].

- Source: Cushman & Wakefield - U.S. Data Center Development Cost Guide (January 2026)
- URL: <https://www.cushmanwakefield.com/en/united-states/insights/data-center-development-cost-guide>

Construction Cost Range

Construction costs typically range from \$600 to \$1,100 per gross square foot, with electrical systems accounting for the largest share of these costs[5].

- Source: BlueCap Economic Advisors (July 2025)
- URL: <https://www.bluecapeconomicadvisors.com/post/cost-data-center>

Employment and Job Creation

National Employment Growth

Employment in U.S. data centers increased more than 60% nationally from 2016 to 2023. The number of people working in data centers grew from 306,000 to 501,000 between 2016 and 2023[7].

- Source: U.S. Census Bureau - Data Centers Growing Fast and Reshaping Local Economies (January 2025)
- URL: <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2025/01/data-centers.html>

Direct and Indirect Job Creation

In Virginia, the data center market supports about 74,000 jobs annually, generating \$5.5 billion in labor income for the state. For every data center job, six indirect jobs are created. About 36,000 of these jobs were directly attributable to data center construction and operation, while about 30,000 jobs were in supplier industries[8].

- Source: [Programs.com](#) - Measuring the Data Center Boom: Facts and Statistics (February 2026)
- URL: <https://programs.com/resources/data-center-statistics/>

Construction Employment Statistics

It takes approximately 1,500 people to build a data center; once operational, the site employs fewer than 200 people[8]. However, substantial construction employment is generated across skilled trades, engineering, and support services during the multi-year building phase.

- Source: [Programs.com](#) - Measuring the Data Center Boom: Facts and Statistics (February 2026)
- URL: <https://programs.com/resources/data-center-statistics/>

Construction Worker Wage Premium

Construction workers on data center projects earn significantly more than their peers on other construction jobs. On the Skillit platform, the average salary for non-data center construction projects is \$62,000 (\$29.80/hour), while data center construction workers make an average salary of \$81,800 (\$39.33/hour), representing a 32% increase[9].

- Source: Fortune - Construction Workers Earning Up to 30% More in Data Center Boom (December 2025)
- URL: <https://fortune.com/2025/12/05/construction-workers-earning-six-figure-salaries-data-center-boom-ai-tech/>

Facility Lifespan and Long-Term Investment

Operational Lifespan

Data centers can last 20 to 30 years, though the economically productive lifespan often caps at 10-15 years without major upgrades[10]. With proper maintenance

and support, data center servers typically function for between 7 and 10 years, with integrated systems averaging around 10 years[11].

- Source: Stack Infrastructure - Aging Data Centers (December 2024)
- URL: <https://www.stackinfra.com/resources/collateral/aging-data-centers-and-why-enterprises-shouldnt-retrofit-them/>
- Source: Procurri - How Long Do Data Center Servers Last (April 2025)
- URL: <https://www.procurri.com/2025/04/24/how-long-do-data-center-servers-last/>

Facility Age Analysis

The mean age of a data center facility in industry surveys is 11.3 years, with the average data center capacity being 10.2 years old [12].

- Source: Data Center Dynamics - How Much Capacity is in Aging Data Centers (December 2024)
- URL: <https://www.datacenterdynamics.com/en/opinions/how-much-capacity-is-in-aging-data-centers/>

Water Usage and Cooling Efficiency

Water Consumption Benchmarks

A medium-sized data center can consume up to 110 million gallons of water per year for cooling, equivalent to the annual water consumption of a small community[13].

- Source: Environmental and Energy Study Institute (June 2025)
- URL: <https://www.eesi.org/articles/view/data-centers-and-water-consumption>

Water Efficiency and Recirculation

Closed-Loop Systems

Direct liquid-cooling systems transfer heat generated by IT equipment directly to a recirculating chilled-water loop. Modern data centers use highly efficient cooling systems, including air-cooled or closed-loop designs that emphasize water recirculation[14].

- Source: U.S. Department of Energy - Cooling Water Efficiency Opportunities (March 2025)
- URL: <https://www.energy.gov/femp/cooling-water-efficiency-opportunities-federal-data-centers>

Advanced Cooling Technologies

Immersion cooling and direct-to-chip cooling can reduce water consumption by 20-90% in water-scarce regions and decrease facility power needs by 18%, depending on the technology and climate[15].

- Source: World Economic Forum - Water Circularity for Data Centres (January 2026)
- URL: <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2025/11/data-centres-and-water-circularity/>

Cooling Tower Optimization

Cooling towers traditionally operate at 3-5 cycles of concentration before blowdown becomes necessary. However, many facilities can safely operate at 8-12 cycles with proper water chemistry management. Each cycle increase represents approximately a 10-12% reduction in makeup water requirements [16].

- Source: Genesis Water Technologies - Data Center Water Usage Efficiency Guide (October 2025)
- URL: <https://genesishwatertech.com/blog-post/data-center-water-usage-efficiency-guide/>

Water Usage Effectiveness (WUE)

Water-use effectiveness is a site-based metric that measures how efficiently a facility uses water relative to the energy consumption of IT equipment, expressed in liters per kilowatt-hour[14][17].

- Source: U.S. Department of Energy - Cooling Water Efficiency Opportunities (March 2025)
- URL: <https://www.energy.gov/femp/cooling-water-efficiency-opportunities-federal-data-centers>
- Source: Data Center Knowledge - Guide to Water Usage Effectiveness (January 2025)
- URL: <https://www.datacenterknowledge.com/cooling/a-guide-to-data-center-water-usage-effectiveness-wue-and-best-practices>

Infrastructure Investment

Fiber Connectivity Requirements

Redundant, high-capacity fiber infrastructure is crucial for maintaining dependable connections between data centers and users worldwide. Fiber-optic lines contribute nearly \$150 billion to total investments in data infrastructure and AI [18].

- Source: LandGate - The New Real Estate: Data Centers, Energy & Infrastructure (January 2026)
- URL: <https://www.landgate.com/news/the-new-real-estate-data-centers-energy-infrastructure-development-in-the-u-s>

BEAD Funding for Fiber Deployment

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) has approved \$23 billion in state awards with \$20 billion more to follow. Approximately 65% of BEAD-funded locations are set for fiber deployments[19].

- Source: RCR Wireless - Metro Connect 2026: Fiber on the Rise (February 2026)
- URL: <https://www.rcrwireless.com/20260226/ai-infrastructure/metro-connect-2026-fiber-on-the-rise-data-centers-under-fire>

Global Infrastructure Investment

Global data center infrastructure spending is projected to approach \$7 trillion over the next five years, with bulk capital flowing toward energy capacity, server connectivity, and cooling infrastructure[20].

- Source: Morgan Lewis - Data Center 2026 Outlook (December 2025)
- URL: <https://www.morganlewis.com/pubs/2025/12/data-center-2026-outlook-energy-infrastructure-and-connectivity>

Community Partnerships and STEM Education

Corporate Community Investment Programs

Meta Data Center Community Action Grants

Meta's annual Data Center Community Action Grants program provides direct funding to schools, registered nonprofits, and community organizations in locations where they have data centers. The program supports projects that address critical community needs by putting technology to use for community benefit, enabling people to build strong, sustainable communities, and improving local STEAM education[21].

- Source: Meta Data Center Community Action Grants (November 2025)
- URL: <https://datacenters.atmeta.com/community-action-grants/>

Specific Community Investment Examples

Since breaking ground on their DeKalb, Illinois data center in 2020, Meta has awarded grants and sponsorships to support over 65 local projects. The Northern Illinois University Foundation received funding to expand summer programming,

including Huskie Engineering camps for middle and high school students. 65 middle schoolers completed coursework on sensors through STEAM programs, and 40 completed coursework on data and AI [22].

Meta has invested over \$2.5 billion in data center infrastructure in Los Lunas, New Mexico, and awarded grants and sponsorships to support over 210 projects since 2019[22].

In Fort Worth, Texas, Meta has given \$4.9 million in direct funding to local schools and nonprofits across over 175 grants since breaking ground in 2015[22].

- Source: Meta - Expanding Data Center Community Action Grants Program (November 2025)
- URL: <https://about.fb.com/news/2025/11/expanding-meta-data-center-community-action-grants-program/>

QTS Community Engagement

QTS Data Centers partners with organizations like Leaven Kids, sponsoring children's participation in annual educational programs. With the commissioning of every new data center, they fund additional children's participation, fostering broader reach and support for educational opportunities among young learners[23].

- Source: QTS Data Centers - Community Engagement (January 2026)
- URL: <https://qtsdatacenters.com/who-we-are/community-engagement/>

Community Benefit Agreements

Performance-Based Incentives and Community Benefits

Community benefit agreements enable data center expansion that meets community-specific needs. These contracts should include quantifiable data on job opportunities, tax revenue, workforce training programs, health and well-being contributions, and other benefits[24].

- Source: Brookings Institution - Why Community Benefit Agreements Are Necessary (October 2025)
- URL: <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/why-community-benefit-agreements-are-necessary-for-data-centers/>

Cedar Rapids, Iowa Case Study

Officials in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, negotiated a community betterment agreement with Google and QTS. The contract provided a 20-year, 70 percent tax exemption, as long as the project meets the job threshold of at least 31 full-time positions at a high-quality wage rate of at least \$26.20 per hour after construction. Google agreed to pay the city \$400,000 over the next 15 years, while QTS agreed to pay \$18 million over the next 18 years[24].

- Source: Brookings Institution - Why Community Benefit Agreements Are Necessary (October 2025)
- URL: <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/why-community-benefit-agreements-are-necessary-for-data-centers/>

Lancaster, Pennsylvania Agreement

Lancaster, Pennsylvania's community benefit agreement required data center projects to adopt a water-use cap and controls on noise and air emissions. The developers pledged to contribute \$20 million to benefit the community; half for economic development and half for sustainable development[25].

- Source: Government Technology - Data Center Projects and Benefits They Promise (January 2026)
- URL: <https://www.govtech.com/artificial-intelligence/data-center-projects-and-the-benefits-they-promise-the-public>

Recommended Agreement Components

Key features of effective community benefit agreements include transparency, affordability, and sustainability provisions covering: direct payments, community

funds, tax revenues, infrastructure improvements, construction and operating jobs, electric rates, water usage, noise levels, light pollution, workforce training, health and well-being services, digital access for the underserved, and public dashboards with key metrics[24].

- Source: Brookings Institution - Why Community Benefit Agreements Are Necessary (October 2025)
- URL: <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/why-community-benefit-agreements-are-necessary-for-data-centers/>

Environmental Considerations

Noise Pollution

Operational Noise Characteristics

The constant hum of servers, network switches, routers, air conditioning systems, and industrial cooling fans create elevated noise levels. Mechanical systems can generate sound levels exceeding 80 dBA, comparable to those of a leaf blower [26].

However, modern facilities implement noise mitigation strategies and are subject to local noise ordinances.

- Source: Net Zero Insights - Environmental Cost of Data Centers (November 2025)
- URL: <https://netzeroinights.com/resources/data-centers-environmental-cost/>

Community Noise Concerns

Recent studies have examined the effects of infrasound noise pollution on people living near data centers, with recommendations for monitoring areas around data center sites to establish direct links between noise pollution and facilities [27].

- Source: Reddit Discussion - Infrasound Pollution Around Data Centers (February 2026)

- URL: https://www.reddit.com/r/AnnArbor/comments/1r8lwoz/infrasound_pollution_around_datacenters/

Air Quality Considerations

EPA-Regulated Facilities

Communities within one mile of EPA-regulated data centers tend to be disproportionately communities of color and face elevated levels of particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide, and diesel particulate matter above the national median[28]. Some data centers have on-site power generators, which emit NO₂.

- Source: Environmental Data & Governance Initiative - Communities Close to EPA-Regulated Data Centers (January 2026)
- URL: <https://envirodatagov.org/blogs/communities-close-to-epa-regulated-data-centers-face-heightened-air-pollution/>

California Health Impact Analysis

Under EPA modeling for California's grid emissions, public health costs associated with electricity generation are projected to decrease by \$14.1 million from 2023 to 2028, assuming a low data center growth scenario and the retirement of more natural gas plants, partly due to stricter air pollutant emission controls [29].

- Source: UC Riverside News - California Data Center Health Impacts (November 2025)
- URL: <https://news.ucr.edu/articles/2025/11/21/california-data-center-health-impacts-tripled-4-years>

Critical Perspectives and Challenges

Tax Incentive Cost Analysis

States find they lose between 52 and 91 cents on every dollar of tax breaks they give data centers, mostly by exempting companies from paying sales and use tax

on building materials and equipment. At least 10 states already lose more than \$100 million per year in tax revenue to data center incentives[30].

- Source: Good Jobs First - Cloudy with a Loss of Spending Control (April 2025)
- URL: <https://goodjobsfirst.org/cloudy-with-a-loss-of-spending-control-how-data-centers-are-endangering-state-budgets/>

Limited Direct Employment Impact

A statistical analysis found that the average annual number of additional jobs created by each new data center is relatively low (approximately 46 workers) when examining local job creation effects [31].

- Source: Michael J. Hicks - Data Centers and Local Job Creation (November 2025)
- URL: <https://michaeljhicks.substack.com/p/data-centers-and-local-job-creation>

Growing Fiscal Impact Concerns

States are rethinking data center tax incentives amid soaring costs. One state's data center sales tax exemption, which had minimal fiscal impact years ago, now has an annual fiscal impact of \$1.6 billion [32].

- Source: Multistate Insider - States Rethink Data Center Tax Incentives (February 2026)
- URL: <https://www.multistate.us/insider/2026/2/4/states-rethink-data-center-tax-incentives-as-costs-soar>

Additional Industry Resources

Market Growth and Trends

Infrastructure Spending

Data center equipment and infrastructure spending reached \$290 billion in 2024, largely underpinned by hyperscaler capital expenditures[33].

- Source: IoT Analytics - Data Center Infrastructure Market (November 2025)
- URL: <https://iot-analytics.com/data-center-infrastructure-market/>

Supply Growth

Primary market supply in North America totaled a record 8,155 megawatts (MW) in H1 2025, up by 17.6% from H2 2024 and by 43.4% year-over-year[34].

- Source: CBRE - North America Data Center Trends H1 2025 (September 2025)
- URL: <https://www.cbre.com/insights/reports/north-america-data-center-trends-h1-2025>

Federal Data Center Resources

The U.S. Department of Energy maintains comprehensive resources on data center water efficiency, best practices for federal facilities, and optimization opportunities[17].

- Source: Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory - Water Efficiency (December 2024)
- URL: <https://datacenters.lbl.gov/water-efficiency>

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Document Notes

This appendix was compiled to provide transparent documentation of claims made in data center development promotional materials. It includes both supportive evidence and critical perspectives to enable informed community decision-making.

Resources were gathered from government agencies, industry analysts, academic institutions, nonprofit research organizations, and corporate sources as of February 2026.

For questions regarding specific citations or to request additional documentation, don't hesitate to get in touch with Grow Clinton.