



TOWN HALL MEETING TO DISCUSS DATA CENTERS

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2025

7:00 PM

The Mayor and Council of the City of Hogansville will hold a Town Hall Meeting on Tuesday, December 2, 2025, at 7:00 pm at the Royal Theater, 400 E. Main Street, Hogansville, GA 30230.

12/02/2025

Town Hall Meeting

Meeting held at the Royal Theater, 400 E. Main Street, Hogansville, GA 30230.

The Mayor and Council held a Town Hall Meeting to discuss a proposed data center development on Tuesday, December 2, 2025, at 7:00 pm. The project is in the very early information-gathering stage, and no final decision has been made. The purpose of the meeting was to share known information, define what a data center is, and gather community questions and concerns. City leadership stressed that community input is a crucial part of the process and that the development must align with the community's values and long-term well-being.

Present were Mayor Jake Ayers, Council Member Michael Taylor, Council Member Jason Baswell, Council Member Mandy Neese, Council Member Mark Ayers and Council Member Kandis Strickland. Also in attendance were Engineer Greg Ashworth and Community Planner Aaron Fortner.

Mayor Ayers, Engineer Greg Ashworth and Community Planner Aaron Fortner provided a slideshow presentation on the benefits and concerns of data centers. Benefits that were highlighted include significant property tax revenue. A high-level comparison suggested a 450-megawatt data center could produce substantially more tax revenue than a 1,500-home subdivision, without the associated costs for services like schools and police. Low Traffic was also mentioned as a benefit as post-construction, they generate very little traffic. Some Concerns regarding data centers are large buildings can be visually disruptive; screening and buffering are necessary. Other concerns are cooling systems can be a noise nuisance, requiring mitigation plans. Data Centers also require significant power and can use a lot of water for cooling.

The city's water system currently uses about 500,000 gallons of water per day. The proposed site is a 440-acre former spray field. Modern data centers can use air cooling for most of the year. A "closed loop" system uses virtually no water after an initial fill. Another option is for the data center to purchase the city's treated wastewater (currently 600,000 gallons/day discharged) for cooling, creating a new revenue stream. Any developer would be required to pay for all necessary water and sewer system upgrades.

Public Comment and Community Concerns

A significant portion of the meeting was dedicated to public comment, with residents raising numerous concerns:

- **Transparency and Procedure:** Residents expressed frustration over a lack of transparency, frequently citing a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) the city signed with a developer (Fertile Ground Investments) several months prior. They questioned the lack of public records and why a purchase agreement was considered before public due diligence.
- **Impact on Community and Lifestyle:** Many residents, some with deep family roots on Hightower Road, voiced strong emotional opposition. They argued the project contradicts the area's residential and rural character, disrupts their way of life, and devalues their property. Some are considering moving.
- **Environmental and Health Concerns:** Issues raised included potential land contamination at the "Sprayfield," noise pollution from a "hyperscale" AI data center (which was noted as being different from standard data centers), and who would be held liable for potential long-term health issues. Questions were also raised about who would monitor compliance with regulations like the Clean Air Act.

- **Financial Skepticism:** Residents were skeptical of projected revenue, citing past city projects where financial benefits did not materialize. They questioned the potential use of tax abatements.
- **Representation:** Residents living on Hightower Road but outside city limits questioned how the project would benefit them and why they could not vote for the city council making decisions that directly affect them.

Perspectives in Support of Development

- A systems engineer who works on data centers, Joshua Cotton, countered some concerns, stating that modern facilities use advanced sound-dampening, closed-loop or waterless cooling systems, and are cleaner than many other industries.
- A lifelong resident, Dennis Sims, recalled the city's past economic decline and viewed the project as a potential opportunity for growth.
- Another resident thanked the council for exploring options to help the community grow.

Council's Response and Proposed Next Steps

- **Council's Position:** Council members repeatedly stated the project is not a "done deal" and they do not have enough information to be for or against it. They urged residents to get information directly from them instead of social media. One member explicitly stated they would vote "hell no" to a tax abatement.
- **NDA Explanation:** A council member explained the NDA was a standard preliminary step to begin conversations and has since been lifted.
- **Immediate Actions:** The city plans to update its industrial zoning code to be more specific and adopt new standards for data centers addressing buffering, noise, and other concerns.
- **Future Plans:** The city will conduct a precise fiscal analysis and impact assessment of similar existing data centers. Council stressed that they do not yet have all the information regarding this specific data center request and once more information is available, it will be sent out to the public for input.

The Town Hall meeting concluded at 9:09 pm.

A sign-in sheet with speaker information is attached.

Respectfully,


LeAnn Lehigh
City Clerk



TOWN HALL SPEAKER SIGN-IN SHEET



#	NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE	EMAIL
✓ 62	Brenda Benno	9693 Hogginsville Rd	706 302 9190	bsims706@bellsouth.net
✓ 63	Tammy Lambert	614 E Main	770-363-2103	tlcpearl@gmail.com
✓ 64	Rosanna Prado	200 E Main St.	925-963-6323	Zapnado@comcast.net
✓ 65	Aaron Fincher	9866 Hogginsville Rd	706-616-8390	fincher-arce15@gmail.com
✓ 66	Resa Watson	738 Mobley Bridge Rd	706-302-6448	rosa.spanelli13@gmail.com
✓ 67	Joshua Cotton	313 Taliaferro Dr	859-319-0046	joshcotton200@gmail.com
✓ 68	Stacey Smith	1129 Hightower R	706 412 9898	stacey.smith10@gmail.com
✓ 69	Mary Margaret Ware	108 Windlett Dr.	901-496-4194	waremaj@gmail.com
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7pm

9:14pm

TOWN HALL SPEAKER SIGN-IN SHEET

#	NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE	EMAIL
✓ 1	ALBERT PRADO	700 E. MAIN	925-963-6322	albertprado@comcast.net
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3	Ela Boudette	301 Maple Dr.	404-275-0499	ila.boudette@gmail.com
4				
✓ 5	Nick Simpson	374 Holland Rd	706-594-2884	nicksimpson@simpsoninterests.com
✓ 6	Chane Williams	901 Highway 32	706-322-6671	williamsautonk77@gmail.com
✓ 7	BRB. B. Williams	901 Highway 32	706-322-2263	williamsautonk77@gmail.com
✓ 8	Roger Hanlon	101 High St	770-328-1864	hanlonk3@gmail.com
✓ 9	Stetaine Smith	129 Highway 32	706-328-3221	latairve.smith@ethel.net
10	Jane McCoy	440 Sive 11	706-555-2228	
11	Douglas May	11 11	11 11	
✓ 12	Cyndie Hutchings	925 Willowcrest Way	513-377-4743	clutch16@gmail.com
✓ 13	Wanda Lowe	115 Maple Dr. Hwy	706-616-3280	wlowe1952@gmail.com
✓ 14	Chris Moran	9287 14th Avenue	770-328-8406	chris.moran.m@gmail.com
15	Lauren Grey Fogle	125 Oakridge Dr.	706-616-5210	brayfogle@gmail.com
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