



DeKalb County Government

Manuel J. Maloof Center
1300 Commerce Drive
Decatur, Georgia 30030

Agenda Item

File #: 2026-0245

Substitute

3/10/2026

File Status:

Public Hearing: YES NO

Department: Board of Commissioners - District 6

SUBJECT:

Commission District(s): All Commission Districts

An Allocation Not To Exceed \$15,000 Of The DeKalb County General Fund To Be Considered For The 2026 Budget To Science For Georgia To Conduct a Baseline Assessment of DeKalb County's Current Health, Socio-Economic, And Environmental Status and Provide a Third Party Analysis of DeKalb County's Proposed Data Center Regulations Contextualized By The County's Current Health, Socio-Economic, And Environmental Status.

Information Contact: Commissioner Edward C. "Ted" Terry

Phone Number: 404-371-4909

PURPOSE:

An Allocation Not To Exceed \$15,000 Of The DeKalb County General Fund To Be Considered For The 2026 Budget To Science For Georgia To Conduct a Baseline Assessment of DeKalb County's Current Health, Socio-Economic, And Environmental Status and Provide a Third Party Analysis of DeKalb County's Proposed Data Center Regulations Contextualized By The County's Current Health, Socio-Economic, And Environmental Status.

NEED/IMPACT:

This assessment will provide a baseline of DeKalb County's health, socio-economic, and environmental status by including involvement of stakeholders, research of the current state of health, socio-economic, and environmental factors within DeKalb, identification of overburdened areas in DeKalb, and then further will include an analysis of several components of the possible data center ordinance including but not limited to: water use, wastewater, back up generators, noise and light pollution, mitigation efforts during times of drought or intense energy need, and testing requirements for water, air, and noise. This review will be incredibly important to ensure a full understanding of DeKalb County's current health, socio-economic, and environmental status and provide the evidence-based best-practices behind specific ordinance language – contextualized by the current health, socio-economic, and environmental status.

The start date will begin once the contract is approved and executed and will end three months following as this is the estimated time needed to conduct this study.

FISCAL IMPACT:

\$15,000 from the DeKalb County General Fund to be considered for the 2026 Budget

RECOMMENDATION:

To approve the allocation and authorize the Chief Executive Officer or her designee to execute all necessary documents....

Review of Data Center Ordinance in Context of DeKalb County

DeKalb County would like to understand the evidence-based best-practices behind specific ordinance language – contextualized by it’s current health, socio-economic, and environmental status.

Science for Georgia (Sci4Ga) has experience with researching environmental and health hazards and with data centers. Working with residents in DeKalb we hosted several environmental health town halls and created a preliminary data portal. We recently completed a study [evaluating the plausibility of the power demand proposed by the PSC](#).

Sci4Ga could provide the following information as a baseline of DeKalb County’s health, socio-economic, and environmental status.

- Hold meetings with stakeholders in DeKalb including the Board of Health and advocacy organization to understand concerns their concerns around the current state of DeKalb and potential impacts of data center development.
- Research and summarize the current state of health, socio-economic, and environmental factors
 - o If possible, the DeKalb Board of Health can provide more granular, deidentified, data about the health status in DeKalb.
- Synthesize stakeholder concerns and data into a baseline analysis and map
- Identify already overburdened areas of DeKalb

Sci4Ga can then provide an analysis of several components of the proposed data center ordinance in light of evidence-based best practices and specific DeKalb concerns. These include, but are not limited to:

- Water use
- Possible wastewater contamination including coolants and PFAS
- Back-up generators
- Noise and light pollution
- Mitigation efforts during times of drought or intense energy need
- Testing requirements for water, air, and noise

Finally, we will provide a checklist of what communities should be asking about and potential inclusions in Community Benefit Agreements.

Timeline

1 month (this is the most risk to the timeline – depending on the availability of stakeholders):

- Agree on list of stakeholders
- Stakeholder interviews

6 weeks:

- Research, analysis, and synthesis

2 weeks:

- Report out

Approximate Cost:

\$15,000