

Indy Chamber endorses controversial Decatur Township data center proposal

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Indy Chamber on Thursday called for approval of a controversial \$4 billion data center project proposed for an industrial parcel in Decatur Township, despite opposition to the plan among residents in the area.

The chamber said the project—set to be considered by the Metropolitan Development Commission at a 1 p.m. meeting Thursday—“offers a model for responsible data center development,” in part because the land was previously been approved for a more industrial-intensive project.

[Seattle-based Sabey Corp. has proposed to develop](#) a 250-megawatt, two-building facility on a 130-acre site near the northeast corner of Kentucky Avenue and Camby Road. The city rezoned the parcel for industrial development in 2020 for a different project that did not come to fruition, but the land still requires variances to accommodate a data center.



Sabey Corp. is seeking approval to build a two-structure, 1 million-square-foot data center in Decatur Township. (Rendering courtesy of Sabey Corp.)

In addition to two buildings, the project calls for a 10-acre substation that would ramp up to support the data center's eventual 250-megawatt capacity over five years.

At an [open house about the project in November](#), hundreds of residents turned out to express frustration about what they believed to be long-term disinvestment in their community. Attendees voiced fears that the project would worsen existing problems, ranging from deteriorating roads to strained water and power infrastructure.

But Indy Chamber said in its statement that Sabey Corp. has committed to covering related infrastructure costs with plans to invest \$5.4 million in township area improvements, the chamber said. And the project is designed to minimize water impact while the company is paying 100% of the project's electricity costs, which the chamber said means the project won't impact existing customer rates.

"At full buildout, the project is projected to generate more than \$20 million annually in property tax revenue," the chamber said.

The Indy Chamber statement went beyond simply endorsing the Decatur Township project. The business organization said it supports "the responsible development of data centers" across central Indiana, where a number of proposed projects have generated frustration among residents.

"With clear and competitive standards, transparency, and thoughtful leadership, we can seize this moment," Indy Chamber CEO Matt Mindrum said in a statement. "That will help us ensure the Indy region is equipped to lead in the digital economy while protecting the values and assets that make our city, region, and state strong."

The chamber's statement came as the Indianapolis City-County Council Environmental Sustainability [Committee considers whether to create a regulatory structure](#) or requirements for data center projects.

Indy Chamber said it has identified standards central Indiana communities should follow when reviewing projects. Among them: Data centers should pay "their full share" of required infrastructure, address operational issues including noise and emissions with "enforceable commitments," be located on appropriately zoned land and maximize the number of jobs created and the tax revenue that can be realized.