

MM43.75 - Ensuring Due Diligence on Data Centres in Scarborough Southwest - by Councillor Parthi Kandavel, seconded by Councillor Dianne Saxe

Dear Mayor Chow and Members of Toronto City Council,

I am writing in support of Councillor Parthi Kandavel's motion, Ensuring Due Diligence on Data Centres in Scarborough Southwest.

Artificial intelligence and cloud computing are transforming the global economy, and data centres are becoming critical infrastructure that support businesses, public services, healthcare, education, and innovation. However, these facilities also have significant impacts on local communities and infrastructure, including significant water resources in many cases.

These projects should not proceed without rigorous due diligence, transparency, and meaningful public engagement. Residents deserve clear answers about environmental impacts, electricity and water demand, noise mitigation, infrastructure costs, community benefits, and who ultimately bears the financial responsibility for any required upgrades. It is equally important that independent technical reviews occur.

This motion also appropriately recognizes the growing importance of digital sovereignty. As Canada continues to develop its approach to artificial intelligence and critical digital infrastructure, it is reasonable for the City to understand who owns and controls these facilities, how sensitive data will be governed, and whether projects align with emerging federal priorities related to Canadian control of critical AI infrastructure.

Importantly, this motion does not seek to prevent investment or innovation. Rather, it promotes responsible planning by ensuring that major data centre developments are reviewed in the context of the City's forthcoming data centre policies, informed by meaningful public consultation, and supported by robust technical analysis. This approach provides greater certainty for both residents and industry while helping Toronto remain competitive, resilient, and accountable.

I respectfully urge City Council to support this motion to ensure that decisions regarding large-scale data centre developments are transparent, evidence-based, and in the best interests of Scarborough Southwest and all Torontonians.

Sincerely,

Karina Lemke Ward 11

