



Aim Hot Topic Workshop: DATA CENTERS

MONDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2026
AGENDA

9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. Registration

9:30 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. Welcome and Introduction to the Day

We'll start the workshop by welcoming attendees, reviewing what to expect from the day, and offering timely Aim updates.

Speaker:

Matt Greller, Chief Executive Officer, Aim

9:45 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Workshop: Understanding Data Centers: What Local Leaders Need to Know

This workshop provides local leaders with a foundational understanding of what data centers are, why they are growing in quantity and footprint, and why they matter to communities. Participants will learn about the opportunities associated with data center development and the key questions to ask when evaluating proposals from the lens of some of the highest profile data center hyperscalers. The session will help leaders build the background knowledge needed to engage in informed conversations and prepare for deeper discussions later in the day.

Speaker:

Brad Tiez, Director of Government Affairs – Midwest, Data Center Coalition, Google Member

10:30 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. **Workshop:** The Realities of Data Centers and Utility Usage and Impacts

Data center energy and water use are among the top concerns of citizens and local governments alike. Speakers will cover utility demands and how more recent developments have changed these demands. Participants will also gain a clearer picture of how the developers interact with utilities and water systems. Finally, in terms of capacity, participants will gain knowledge of how data center development can assist with additional energy capacity through investment, planning, and innovation.

Speakers:

Erin Schneider, Duke Energy Managing Director of Economic Development, Duke Energy Indiana

Jason Stephenson, Vice President, Regulatory Policy and Affairs, Indiana American Water

11:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. **Workshop:** Planning and Zoning for Data Centers

City and town leaders must ensure their planning and zoning processes can address the unique needs of data center development. Are your current guidelines up to the task? This session will help participants evaluate whether their frameworks are sufficient and explore updates needed to effectively manage these projects, which differ from traditional industrial developments.

Speaker:

Brandon Dickinson, Managing Associate, Dentons

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. **Luncheon Workshop:** The Economic and Civic Impacts – Before, During and After Construction

The economic and civic impacts of data center projects are highly dependent on setting expectations early on with potential project users or developers. With a strategic approach, the positive impacts should span during and after construction. How projects can spur local job growth, increase investment, address existing and new infrastructure, and advance community priorities throughout the development lifecycle are on the list for discussion. Speaking from a position of experience, panelists will talk about how to increase potential benefits, address challenges, and build strategies for maximizing positive outcomes for their communities.

Speakers:

Scott Eckhardt, Principal, Economic Development Amazon Web Services

Josh Huddlestun, Mayor, Hobart

1:00 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. **Workshop:** The Miscellany: Legal Considerations, Moratoria, NDAs, and Weighing Pros and Cons

This workshop provides local leaders with an overview of key legal and policy considerations related to data center developments. Topics such as why some have implemented a moratorium to get their ducks in a row, the latest thoughts on confidentiality agreements (NDAs), and the calculus of weighing pros and cons are just a few of the miscellaneous topics on the docket. The session will help leaders better understand the tools, tradeoffs, and considerations that support thoughtful and informed community decisions.

Speaker:

Jonathan Hughes, Attorney, Bose Public Affairs

1:45 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. **Workshop: How to Actually Hear Your Community on High-Stakes Decisions**

Using data centers as the prime example, the session will explore practical approaches for engaging communities when making these complex, high-impact decisions. Participants will learn strategies for meaningful public input, building trust, navigating differing perspectives, and creating opportunities for constructive dialogue. Local leaders will receive tips for moving beyond traditional outreach methods to better understand community concerns and make more informed decisions. And, can these strategies work alongside addressing safety and threatening situations for all involved?

Speakers:

Sam Julka, Principal and Founder, DORIS Research

Meghan Tooman, Principal and Owner, DORIS Research

2:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. **Break**

2:45 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. **End of Day Q&A**

Depending on availability, the day's experts will remain on hand to address your final questions, concerns, and comments before you head back home to share the knowledge gained throughout the day.

Moderator:

Matt Greller, Chief Executive Officer, Aim

Panel:

Presenters from the Day

3:30 p.m. **Adjourn**