

Timeline of Deception: How Mason's Leaders Pushed a Data Center Through

2024

Fall 2024:

Per City Website; “The City becomes aware of new state legislation intended to attract data centers to Michigan. Around the same time, initial inquiries begin regarding utility availability in the Mason area. At this stage, no specific use or project is identified.”

***later removed entirely from City Website February 2026**

Late 2024 – Per **August 2026** LSJ article: Mayor Whipple says the City was first approached about a potential data center.

Winter 2024/25:

Per City Website: “It becomes increasingly likely that these utility inquiries are related to data center interest from outside entities. However, developers are unsure of the available electric capacity, and potential projects stall. Staff determined that data centers would fall under M2 zoning, and--based on the existing Master Plan-this use may provide benefits to Mason. Staff begin due diligence on ordinance options and potential utility impacts”

***later removed entirely from City Website February 2026**

2025

Early 2025

Spring/Summer 2025:

Per City Website: “City concludes that the existing ordinance does not adequately address or mitigate common concerns associated with data centers. Staff begin gathering information from other communities, reviewing multiple ordinances, and engaging in discussions with jurisdictions that have received data center proposals.”

****later removed entirely from City Website February 2026**

Spring 2025 – LSJ Article 9/2026 states: Whipple says talks with the developer became "serious".

Fall 2025- The City Website says,

“Interest in Mason becomes more

concrete as utility providers indicate that adequate power may be available in the area. City representatives encourage interested parties to wait until the ordinance is completed so community

standards can be appropriately addressed. Staff discussed lessons learned with Howell Township officials, who expressed a desire to have had an ordinance in place before development occurred and discussed the major concerns from their residents that should be mitigated. The draft M3 ordinance is finalized through conversations with local boards, communities that host data centers, local stakeholders, and industry representatives.”

****later removed entirely from City Website February 2026**

June 2025

June 17, 2025 – City Manager Stuart emails New Albany, Ohio officials:

"We are working on a development project that you have had some similar experience with... I was wondering if you were willing to chat, so I can get your insights and anticipate some of the items we may need to mitigate."

Why this matters: New Albany is home to Comino Development, Bryan Stone's company. Stuart was researching the developer's home community months before publicly acknowledging the project.

July 2025

Late July 2025 – City Council holds a closed session under OMA Sections 8(d) and 8(h) to "consider the Purchase or Lease of Real Property" and "consider a Written Legal Opinion."

What the Mayor later admitted happened in this closed session:

- All Council members were informed of a potential data center and its location
- The City Manager was authorized to pursue discussions with Vevay Township on a 425 agreement

Why this matters: Authorizing the City Manager to act is a decision, not "consideration." Decisions must be made in open session with a recorded vote. The closed session exceeded what OMA allows.

August 2025

August 2025 – Whipple begins drafting the data center ordinance. No public discussion. No Council vote to authorize.

September 2025

September 2025 – Whipple and two Council members (Preadmore and Droscha) take a trip to New Albany, Ohio. They call it a "boys trip."

September 30, 2025 – Stuart emails New Albany officials:

"We did have a few elected officials visit New Albany last week and they were very impressed by what you have accomplished and the buffering that we would like to model."

She attached 12 detailed technical questions about zoning, setbacks, and approval processes.

Why this matters: The City Manager's official email proves this was official city business, not a "boys trip." The Mayor and two Council members were actively gathering data to draft Mason's ordinance, while excluding the other four Council members.

October 2025

October 2025 – Stuart introduces developer Bryan Stone (Comino Development) to Ingham County Deputy Drain Commissioner Paul Pratt:

"I have giving Paul a high-level update and noted that this project is in the due diligence stage, but that the drain element is critical."

Stone follows up:

"Deborah is very much correct in saying the drain has become a critical issue on our end."

October 23–29, 2025 – Stone and Stuart continue coordinating meetings with the Drain Commissioner, with Stuart copied on all correspondence.

October 2025 – The city begins working on its zoning ordinance as state and federal officials push for more data centers.

Why this matters: Stuart knew the developer's identity and was actively coordinating with him, while continuing to tell the public she didn't know who the developer was. This would be exposed as a lie when FOIA records confirmed her direct involvement.

November 2025

November 2025 – The city proposes a new zoning district ordinance for data centers. No formal application has been submitted. No developer has been publicly identified.

Mayor Whipple tells media:

"We're hoping to get ahead of that in case somebody does come along and wants to put a data center in Mason."

"Data centers fit this bill almost perfectly."

November 22, 2025 – City holds an informal one hour open house for residents to ask questions about the proposal.

December 2025

December 1, 2025 – Second one hour open house.

December 9, 2025 – Planning Commission holds a public hearing. Residents pack the room, speaking out against the ordinance. Commissioners initially reject the amended ordinance, residents applaud. Then, after most residents leave, the commissioners change their minds and vote to approve it.

Resident Christine Baxter:

"Absolutely not. It was very confusing... it seems almost cheated."

December 15, 2025 – City Council holds a contentious meeting. Residents pack City Hall. Paula Caltrider warns:

"What do you all know that we don't?... This decision is not up to four people... I'll bring an army, we will unseat you, we will fundraise, we will lawyer up & I'm putting you on notice."

Councilman and Mayor Pro Tem Leon Clark moves to table the ordinance for 90 days. Council votes 4-3 to approve a 90-day moratorium on data center zoning.

A highly controversial incident occurred. The confrontation took place immediately following that chaotic and heated Mason City Council meeting.

the December 2025 incident with Leon Clark aligns directly with previous accusations made by the family of former **Mason Police Chief Mark Wriggelsworth regarding **City Manager Deborah Stuart's** toxic and aggressive leadership style.

December 16, 2025 – Clark submits a one-sentence resignation letter: "I resign." He meets with Whipple and Stuart, tells them "I'm getting out of the way," hands them the letter, and walks out.

Whipple says: "Leon's not a quitter. I'm surprised."

Why this matters: Clark was the swing vote who pushed for the moratorium. His resignation removed the last significant check on the Mayor and City Manager's agenda.

2026

January 2026

January 5, 2026 – Council votes 4-2 to advance amended language for Ordinance 266 after hours of public testimony.

At this same meeting, the Council rescinds its earlier decision to form a citizen advisory committee and instead creates an online public comment portal.

January 5, 2026 – Council votes 4-2 to advance amended language for the ordinance after hours of public testimony.

January 2026 – John Vercher is appointed to fill Clark's vacancy. Vercher is seen as favorable to the data center proposal. The Council makeup shifts from skeptical to supportive.

The portal opens January 7, 2026 with a submission deadline of January 23, 2026. The city reports received 114 public comments.

Why it was controversial:

- It replaced face-to-face input – The Council had approved a citizen advisory committee on December 15, 2025, but scrapped it just weeks later, claiming a committee would require "significant time and staff resources" and would "exclude the input of other interested people."
- It restricted what residents could say – The portal's instructions stated it was "not intended to be a comment area to express your disagreement with the industry in general, but rather recommendations for improvements to the proposed ordinance." Residents could not simply oppose data centers, they had to offer "improvements." This effectively silenced those who opposed the project entirely.
- It raised Open Meetings Act concerns – Michigan Press Association General Counsel Jennifer Dukarski reviewed the resolution and raised concerns that it could violate the Michigan Open Meetings Act by restricting public comment. In response, Mayor Whipple edited the resolution to clarify that the written

comment period "does not in any way restrict anyone's right to comment through other public comment means."

- It discriminated against seniors and residents without internet. An online-only portal creates barriers for seniors, low-income residents, and anyone without reliable internet access. The city replaced in-person engagement with a digital system that many could not easily use, effectively silencing some of the community's most vulnerable members.

Why this matters: This was part of a pattern. The city repeatedly found ways to limit public input while moving the data center forward. The portal wasn't about engagement—it was about control. When the public's voice became inconvenient, the city found ways to silence it.

February 2026

February 2, 2026 – Council passes Ordinance 266 (M-3 Technology Innovation District) by a 5-2 vote over sustained public opposition.

The ordinance creates a new zoning district with poor standards for noise, setbacks, buffering, dark sky-compliant lighting, and emergency generator restrictions. Has “Use by Right” & not “Special Land Use” to protect the people.

Nearly all speakers oppose it. Residents call it a "data center welcome mat." One resident warns of "irreversible and catastrophic" consequences.

Why this matters: The Council passed the ordinance despite overwhelming public opposition.

February 7, 2026

The city's website just changed from Fall 2025**

Before, it said: "aquifer capacity study" to find the "maximum sustainable daily draw" for our shared groundwater. Now it says: "water resource study" to look at the "municipal system with our existing wells."

They erased the word aquifer. They narrowed it from our community's water to their own infrastructure.

February 11, 2026 – Developer's attorney Alan Greene of Dykema Gossett PLLC sends a detailed letter to Stuart and Community Development Director Hude. The letter:

- Asks detailed zoning questions for a "potential hyperscale data center development"
- Explicitly acknowledges a pending referendum, before it was even organized
- Asks about M-2 zoning "in case M-3 is overturned" , they already had a backup plan

Why this matters: The developer knew about the referendum before it was organized. Someone told them. And they already had a backup plan ready.

February 13, 2026 – Petition drive enters final weekend, with organizers racing to meet the required signature threshold.

February 16, 2026 – The letter is included in the City Council meeting packet, buried in over 200 pages of documents. The public is never notified. Stuart has had the letter in her inbox since February 11.

March 2026

March 2, 2026 – Residents submit 755 valid signatures, well above the 600 required. The petition formally suspends the ordinance.

March 16, 2026 – Council votes 4-2 to repeal Ordinance 266.

They had two choices: let the people vote in August, or repeal it to block the vote. They chose to block the vote.

Mayor Whipple announces that the "threat" of a hyperscale data center has become more serious.

Councilmembers voting for repeal said it "allows the city and community to start working together on alternatives."

Why this matters: The repeal eliminated the stricter M-3 standards and left the developer free to build under the less restrictive M-2 zoning, exactly as the developer's backup plan anticipated.

April 2026

April 2026 – Recall efforts are launched against Mayor Whipple and Councilwoman Elaine Ferris over their data center votes.

May 2026

May 2, 2026 – New York Times features Mason advocacy leaders Paula Caltrider and Rita Vogel for bipartisan activism against the data center proposal. The article highlights how grassroots opposition in Mason has crossed party lines, a testament to the breadth of community concern. This national recognition confirms Mason is not a fringe movement but a mainstream community response to government overreach.

June 2026

June 1, 2026– Deborah Stuart stated during the City Council meeting that she was negotiating a Public Act 425 agreement with Vevay Township concerning the proposed data-center property and Vevay was on board.

June 2026 – City posts 60-day FOIA delay notice. The Michigan Press Association calls them out, stating there is "no flexibility in the law" for such delays.

June 2026 – The city announces it was approached in April by an entity representing a data center company wanting to build on nearly 400 acres at Columbia and College roads in Vevay Township.

June 2026 – Vevay Township Board of Trustees votes unanimously to refuse to enter into negotiations for a data center land agreement with Mason. FOIA records from Vevay show there was no negotiating with Vevay Township with Deborah Stuart as she indicated on June 1, 2026. Supervisor in Vevay Township also admits there was no discussion with Deborah Stuart in the meeting for negotiating.

June 25, 2026 –The Michigan Chamber of Commerce released a major, independent data center study, that explicitly used the escalating chaos in Mason as a core case study of what local governments should avoid doing. The study, commissioned by the Michigan Chamber Foundation in partnership with the Detroit Regional Chamber, was researched by Public Sector Consultants (PSC). It was specifically designed to create a roadmap for "responsible data center development" after watching communities across the state tear themselves apart over these projects. The study pointed to Mason as the ultimate example of how poor public transparency destroys community trust.

The Chamber's Solution

Instead of the "quiet diplomacy" and backroom vetting handled by Mason administration, the Chamber used the case study to argue for a "transparency-first" model. They recommended that municipalities treat data center prospects with open public forums from day one, establishing clear, unyielding local standards on noise, water, and power first.

July 2026

July 21, 2026 – Mayor claims the closed session followed the same process as a school lease closed session and was not an OMA violation.

The school lease closed session was legitimate because it stayed within the narrow scope of what OMA allows: discussing lease terms for city-owned property. No decisions were made behind closed doors.

The data center closed session exceeded that scope. The Mayor himself admitted that the City Manager was "authorized" to act—and authorization is a decision that must be made in public.

The Mayor claims the two closed sessions followed the "same process." But his own public statements via Facebook prove otherwise:

- He admitted that in the July 2025 closed session, the City Manager was "authorized to generally represent the City regarding the potential for a data center."
- He admitted that all Council members were informed of a potential data center and its location in that closed session.
- He admitted that once a request for services was received, "this information was no longer subject to closed meeting rules."

This last admission is key: The Mayor essentially acknowledged that the city used the closed session to conceal information from the public until they were legally forced to disclose it. That is not how OMA works. The law requires transparency from the beginning, not after the city is caught.

The Mayor is trying to use a legitimate, narrow closed session about a school lease to justify an entirely different closed session that went far beyond what OMA allows. The school lease was about discussing terms for city property. The data center closed session was about making decisions, authorizing the City Manager to act, without a public vote.

He is comparing apples to oranges and hoping no one notices.

August 1, 2026- Disclosure Found By Citizens Forcing Whipple & Deborah Stuart to be honest

August 2026- Dolton gives FOIA to Paula Caltrider earlier, and the information was released. FOIA show back on October 20, 2025 – Deborah Stuart sent an email to Paul Pratt at the Ingham County Dain Commission that introduced Bryan Stone of Comino Development. She wrote that she gave Pratt a “high-level” update, and that the project was in the “due diligence” stage as the drain was critical. She asked for an in-person meeting. Stone told Pratt that the drain had become a ‘critical issues on our end” and said he wanted to explain where they were in the process and learn what options might be available. November 24, 2025 – Email to Stone from Pratt states all issues with moving the drain.

August 21, 2026- Lansing State Journal comes out reporting on FOIAs from the drain above. Whipple admits in article that his “Boys Trip” with Jon Droscha*& Scott Predmore he called personal, was to meet with Bryan Stone from Comino Development as Bryan guided them around on the visit. He also stated that “Stone had knowledge of what was going on in New Albany, Ohio so we drove down there” This was the first time the community has heard this as Whipple said in the past this was only a personal trip and has never mentioned Bryan Stone or participating in city business.

In the article, Deborah Stuart stated she could not discuss anything about Bryan Stone or Comino Development as it would be a liability but she did not sign an NDA. It was also disclosed that Deborah Stuart was approached back in 2024 about a potential data center. The article also talks about Deborah Stuart introducing Bryain Stone from Comino Development to the Dain Commissioner in October of 2025. This was never disclosed to the public or all of City Council members.

August 27, 2026- Dolton gives Emails to Paula Caltrider. Emails recovered from both Representative Bixie and Senator Anthony giving more information than what was disclosed to the public from Deborah Stuart. Representative Brixie states Deborah Stuart was asking her to about a Cedar St exit ramp and if Brixie could assist with MDOT to make an additional exit. This was never discussed in public meetings.

August 2026

August 3, 2026 – City Manager Exceeds Administrative Role in Meeting with State Representative Julie Brixie.

What Happened:

City Manager Deb Stuart met with State Representative Julie Brixie to discuss the data center proposal. According to Brixie's own letter documenting the meeting, Stuart did far more than provide an informational update.

Brixie's letter states:

"During the meeting I went over House Bills 6135-6142 and Manager Stuart recommended potential legislative changes to strengthen and streamline water usage reporting requirements."

Stuart also inquired about a temporary MDOT; Cedar Street exit ramp for construction and asked whether Brixie's office could "assist in communications with MDOT" if the project were approved.

Why This Exceeds Administrative Duty

In a Council-Manager form of government, the roles are clearly defined.

The City Manager is "the executive officer and head of the administrative branch of the city" who is "responsible to the city council for the proper administration of all affairs of the city." Their core function is implementation, not creation.

Recommending legislative changes is not administration, it is policy-making. A City Manager does not have the authority to decide the city's position on state legislation without explicit, public authorization from the Council.

Inquiring about an MDOT exit ramp for a project that had not been approved by the Council is also outside administrative duties. It preemptively commits the city to a course of action that should be decided by elected officials in open session.

Some Michigan cities have recognized this distinction and codified it. Clawson's charter, for example, states that no officer or employee shall "initiate, sponsor, promote or lobby for the passage of any legislation in the State of Michigan unless prior consent of the council is obtained."

The Mayor's Contradiction

Mayor Whipple has claimed that Stuart was "authorized" to act in the July 21, 2025 closed session. But that closed session was limited to:

- Section 8(d): "to consider the Purchase or Lease of Real Property"
- Section 8(h): "to Consider a Written Legal Opinion by the City Attorney"

Neither of these authorized Stuart to recommend legislative changes or coordinate state infrastructure support. The closed session did not give her explicit direction to lobby on behalf of the developer or take policy positions on state legislation.

When Stuart met with Brixie and recommended legislative changes and coordinated state infrastructure support, she was not performing an administrative duty. She was making policy, and that authority belongs to the Council, in open session, with a recorded vote.

The August 5th Meeting: An Overstep of Authority – Stuart meets with Senator Anthony, "expressed support" for data center-related bills, discussing the "need for personal property tax to remain the same for utilities." Engaging in State-Level Policy Advocacy, Lobbying Without Public Authorization, Going Beyond a Simple Update. By engaging in policy discussions, advocating for specific legislative outcomes, and acting as the city's representative on pending state bills, City Manager Stuart was not performing an administrative duty. She was making policy, a power that rests solely with the City Council and must be exercised in public sessions. This is a significant overstep of her authority and further erodes public trust in the city's leadership.

August 18, 2026 – City Council unanimously approves the "Mason Connect" data center strategy, including:

- A dedicated data center webpage

- Neighborhood conversations with city staff
- A September 14 Town Hall

Resident Susan Elliott tells Council:

"Your goal is not to protect us. It is to usher this (data center) in, because you're set on having it."

"I have personally been requesting one since December. We don't need more one-sided or cherry-picked questions... We need actual transparency."

August 21, 2026 – Lansing State Journal identifies Comino Development as the developer behind the proposal.

Stuart tells the LSJ she has no NDA, meaning there was no legal reason she couldn't have been transparent.

She declined to discuss Comino or Bryan Stone, saying doing so could "subject her or the city to liability."

Whipple defends the New Albany trip as "due diligence," "good governance," and "being responsible."

August 2026 – FOIA requests continue to reveal the scope of the city's coordination with the developer, directly contradicting months of public statements from city officials who claimed not to know who the developer was.

Why this matters: The Mayor keeps asking for "evidence of impropriety" as if only a criminal act counts. But government integrity is not measured by criminality, it is measured by honesty, transparency, and respect for the public. The deception documented in these records is the evidence.

September 2026

September 2, 2026 – A new recall effort is launched against Mayor Russell Whipple.

September 4, 2026 – City Manager's Report announces the "Mason Connect" launch:

- September 14 Town Hall – Questions must be submitted and ranked ahead of time

- Neighborhood Conversations – Small group meetings with city staff
- New Data Center Information Webpage – Centralized "information" hub

September 5, 2026 – Editing and updating this timeline for the community I love.

September 8, 2026 – City Council meeting scheduled. No data center items on the agenda.

September 9, 2026 – Planning Commission meeting scheduled. No data center items on the agenda.

September 14, 2026 – Town Hall scheduled. Mason City Hall.

The Pattern: What They Said vs. What They Did

What They Said What They Did

"We didn't know the developer" Stuart introduced Stone to Drain Commissioner (Oct 2025)—FOIA proved the lie

"The trip was personal" Stuart's email says it was official business (Sept 2025)

"We didn't know about the referendum" Developer's attorney acknowledged it (Feb 2026)

"Repeal was to strengthen regulations" Developer had M-2 backup plan ready (Feb 2026)

"We can't share due to liability" Stuart admitted she has NO NDA (Aug 2026)

"The packet was public" Buried in 200+ pages no one sees

"The portal was for public input" Replaced in-person voice with digital barrier excluding seniors and vulnerable residents

The Cost to the Community:

What Was Lost Why It Matters

Your Right to Vote

Council repealed ordinance to block the referendum after 755 signatures

Your Voice in Government

Secret deals made without your knowledge; online portal discriminated against elders

Your Trust in Leadership Mayor and City Manager lied repeatedly, FOIA proved it

Local Control Annexation process now decided by the state

A Skeptical Council Voice Clark resigned after moratorium passed

The Integrity of the Process

Legal loopholes exploited to bypass democracy

National Scrutiny

New York Times recognized community opposition, the world is watching

Rita Vogel

Community Advocate & Strategist

Protecting Mason's Rural Legacy

Formally on City Council, Now on Their Case

-some additions from the community.

10 Things a New City Council Might Be Able To Do Immediately (Starting January 2027)

1. Remove the City Manager – The City Manager serves at the pleasure of the City Council. A new Council can remove her by majority vote immediately, with or without cause.

2. Impose a New Moratorium – The Council can impose a new moratorium on data center approvals while they re-evaluate the city's zoning strategy and rebuild public trust.
3. Repeal or Re-Enact a Data Center Ordinance – The Council can repeal the existing M-3 ordinance or pass a new one that includes robust public input, independent EMF testing, and community consent provisions.
4. Investigate OMA Violations – The Council can investigate past closed sessions and the City Manager's lobbying activities, and refer potential violations to the Ingham County Prosecutor or Michigan Attorney General.
5. Pass Resolutions on Key Issues – The Council can pass resolutions opposing annexation, calling for state legislation, or supporting community consent and independent testing.
6. Reform the Public Engagement Process – The Council can eliminate or overhaul "Mason Connect" and replace it with a genuine community engagement process that includes in-person meetings and a citizen advisory committee.
7. Codify the City Manager's Role – The Council can clarify the City Manager's duties to explicitly state that the Manager is an administrative officer only.
8. Prohibit Unauthorized Lobbying – The Council can pass an ordinance prohibiting the City Manager from lobbying or advocating on state legislation without explicit Council authorization.
9. Require Explicit Council Direction – The Council can require that all Manager actions outside routine administration must have explicit Council direction.
10. Amend the City Charter – The Council can begin the process of amending the City Charter to permanently embed these protections, which would require a public vote.

A new City Council in January 2027 will have the authority to explore all of these items immediately. They will have a mandate from the voters to restore trust and accountability.

EMAILS FROM Representative Brixie, Senator Anthony included below.

FOIAs FROM Paul Pratt- Drain Commissioner & New Albany, Ohio are included below.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Rep. Julie Brixie (District 73)** <JulieBrixie@house.mi.gov>

Date: Wed, Aug 26, 2026, 5:44 PM

Subject: RE: Request for Transparency Regarding Proposed Mason/Vevay Data Center

To:

Rep. Brixie
Email 1-2

Good afternoon Patrick,

Thank you for reaching out to my office with this inquiry. As you already know, I met with City Manager Deb Stuart on Monday, August 3rd of 2026 in my office. This is the first and only time we have met to discuss this proposal, and I have not met nor shared communications with any of the folks involved in the proposal from the developer side. A member of my staff did attend and listen to the Mason Planning Commission's Data Center Public Comment Meeting on Tuesday, December 9th.

Because of recent developments relating to the proposal ([Data center developers will pursue Vevay Twp. annexation](#)), the city manager contacted me to meet and discuss the most current details of the proposal and the recently proposed legislation addressing data center guardrails ([Andrews, Fellow Democrats Introduce Comprehensive Legislative Package Putting Guardrails on Data Centers](#)).

As I'm sure you know, this issue has been discussed at length in the community and could significantly impact the 73rd district. My impression was that the purpose of the meeting with Manager Stuart was intended to be a standard update about the current situation in Mason and legislative action in response to data center proposals and projects across the state.

To the best of my recollection, Manager Stuart wanted to bring me up to speed so I was aware of what was going on at the local level. We discussed the public timeline of events leading up to the date of the meeting, the passage and retraction of the M-3 Zoning Ordinance, the State Boundary Commission annexation process, the rejection of the proposed 425 agreement with Vevay Township, viewed the potential site using online maps, and reviewed the predicted tax revenue increases from the project for the City of Mason (\$7.6 million for the first year, although I believe this prediction has increased since our meeting) and the Mason School District (not calculated by the city). The Manager informed me that if the proposal is approved, the city intends to halve the operating millage rate from 16.25 mills to 8 mills over 10 years and utilize the additional revenue to pay off existing drain debt obligations early.

Also discussed was the legality of a temporary exit directly from the highway exit ramp at Cedar Street for use during construction. Manager Stuart inquired about the possibility of such a temporary exit to minimize traffic impacts and if our office would be able to assist in communications with MDOT to discuss this proposal if the project were approved. To date, we have not discussed this with any state departments as the project has not been approved.

During the meeting I went over House Bills 6135-6142 and Manager Stuart recommended potential legislative changes to strengthen and streamline water usage reporting requirements. I also discussed draft legislation that I

Brixie
2-1

have been working on to change the procedure for annexation of township land by a city. This draft legislation would give city electors residing in the annexing city or the property being annexed a chance to initiate a petition for referendum when the land being annexed is under 100 residents, something not currently permitted in statute. Additionally, we discussed legislative strategies to address any unforeseen tax loopholes that data center projects could potentially abuse across the state.

While I understand that residents in (and outside) the district have been actively participating in the various democratic processes that interact with a proposal like this, I do think it's important to highlight that in my position as State Representative I do not have a direct vote on whether or not this proposal moves forward or what shape it may take. This is precisely why I have been involved and supportive of legislation that would address district-specific and statewide concerns about ongoing data center development. As recently as yesterday, I cosponsored a package of bills that would be follow-up measures to the previously mentioned Data Center Guardrails package. These bills would require additional data center specific compliance with our clean energy goals as established in PA 235 of 2023, establish reporting procedures regarding water and electricity use, and direct covered utilities to develop a clean technologies accelerator “tariff” (rate) for commercial and industrial customers, including large energy-use facilities. The “tariff” would enable customers to support the procurement of clean energy resources in lieu of, or in addition to, those included in a covered utility’s Integrated Resource Plan.

Included as attachments are the scheduling emails that my office exchanged with the City Manager and a chart that was given to us during the meeting. I did not personally speak or email with the manager prior to the meeting and neither myself nor my office have exchanged any follow-up communications with Manager Stuart.

As an aside, I am a strong supporter of extending FOIA to the Legislature and the Executive Office. The Senate has already passed these bills and they are waiting for a vote in the House.

Finally, thank you for taking the time to contact me. Please keep in mind that I am a human being and these are the best of my recollections of the meeting. Should you have any further questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to my office at (517) 373-0218 or via email at JulieBrixie@house.mi.gov.

Sincerely,

Julie Brixie

State Representative

From: **Office of Senator Sarah E. Anthony** <sensanthony@senate.michigan.gov>

Date: Fri, Aug 28, 2026, 4:33 PM

Subject: Re: Request for Transparency Regarding Proposed Mason/Vevay Data Center

To:

Senator
Anthony
Email

1-2

Hey Patrick,

Thank you for contacting the Office of State Senator Sarah Anthony.

We appreciate you reaching out. Senator Anthony and a member of our team did meet with Manager Stuart in person, in our office on Wednesday, August 5th, 2026. The main topic of this meeting was to discuss the pending Data Center development near Mason, community impact/sentiment, and proposed legislation in the Michigan Legislature. To my knowledge, there have been no meetings prior to August 5th with Manager Stuart or anyone else representing the City of Mason on this topic. Senator Anthony and our team frequently proactively meet with local municipalities, managers, and elected leaders across the 21st district. This tool is a critical part of a state legislative office and is not an abnormal thing to do. It helps us remain aware of local issues, concerns, and stay engaged with our community.

This meeting was granted because our office has heard from residents in and around Mason about their concerns with the pending Data Center and the potential impact it would have on our community. It remains a top priority to listen to constituents when they voice concerns and make sure that they are elevated through the proper channels. A large portion of this meeting was dedicated to uplifting constituent concerns about the potential impact as it relates to environmental safety, utilities, and property values; we also listened and learned more about potential revenue benefits this could bring to the City of Mason, Mason Public Schools, and Vevay Township.

A pending bill package before the Michigan State Senate was included in this conversation with Manager Stuart. Senate Bills [1046](#), [1047](#), [1048](#), [1049](#), [1050](#), [1051](#), [762](#) and [763](#). For awareness, this package aims to provide environmental and consumer protections as it relates to data centers across the state. This includes limiting water and utility usage, creates labor protections, restricts public officials from signing NDAs, and requires data center developers to enter agreements that ensure safety and well-being of residents and the environment. Senator Anthony has been supportive of these bills, and part of the legislative process is hearing from community members and leaders about the potential impact. This is so if the state acts, it is done correctly and reflects what our communities need.

To our knowledge, the Senator and our team have not communicated at any point in time about the data center project with any other stakeholders involved – that includes the developer, end user, or other city officials. Our office also has not communicated with the any

state agencies regarding this matter. It is important to remember that approval and zoning for projects such as these falls under the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act ([PA 110 of 2006](#)), meaning that under current law, approval for projects are strictly within local control and do not directly involve state offices or state departments.

Anthony
2 of 2

I hope this provides the clarity you were looking for. Our team remains open to conversation surrounding this project from constituents. Although we do not have direct power to make decisions on this matter, it helps influence the actions the Senator takes within the state legislature. Please do not hesitate to reach out at any time if you have any questions.

Best,

Nick Gewirtz

District Director

Office of Senator Sarah Anthony

Senate Appropriations Chairwoman

(Office): 517-373-6960

Office Address

[201 Townsend Street](#)

[Lansing, MI 48933](#)

All the best,

Bryan

Drain
1-6

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New Albany, Ohio 43054
[216.831.4710](tel:216.831.4710) | bryan@cominodev.com

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From: Deborah Stuart <deborahs@mason.mi.us>
Date: Monday, October 20, 2025 at 4:01 PM
To: Bryan Stone <Bryan@cominodev.com>, Paul Pratt <ppratt@ingham.org>
Cc: Deborah Stuart <deborahs@mason.mi.us>
Subject: Drain Question Mason Area

Bryan and Paul:

Based on our conversations, I would like to connect with you virtually. I have giving Paul a high-level update and noted that this project is in the due dilligence stage, but that the drain element is critical. Paul was very open to discussing the options that may be required for your proposed development and suggested a meeting in person may be the most beneficial.

Contact Information Below for Both Parties:

Paul Pratt
Deputy Drain Commissioner

Drain
2 of 6

All the best,

Bryan

Bryan Matthew Stone | Managing Principal
Comino (Community Innovation Development Partners)
5195 Hampsted Village Center Way, 253
New Albany, Ohio 43054
[216.831.4710](tel:216.831.4710) | bryan@cominodev.com

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From: Bryan Stone <Bryan@cominodev.com>
Date: Monday, October 20, 2025 at 9:02 PM
To: Deborah Stuart <deborahs@mason.mi.us>, Paul Pratt <ppratt@ingham.org>
Cc: Deborah Stuart <deborahs@mason.mi.us>
Subject: Re: Drain Question Mason Area

Deborah,

Thank you for the introduction!

Paul,

It is a pleasure to make your virtual acquaintance. Deborah is very much correct in saying the drain has become a critical issue on our end and I would love to have the chance to meet with you in person to walk you through where we are in our process and

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From: Paul Pratt <PPratt@ingham.org>
Date: Wednesday, October 22, 2025 at 6:57 PM
To: Bryan Stone <Bryan@cominodev.com>, Deborah Stuart <deborahs@mason.mi.us>
Cc: Deborah Stuart <deborahs@mason.mi.us>
Subject: Re: Drain Question Mason Area

Bryan—My apologies for not responding sooner. I've been in meetings most of yesterday and today. I'm available mid-afternoon tomorrow and Friday between 11 and 1. I'll call you in one of those windows, when I can grab a few minutes of our staff engineer's time to join me.—Paul

From: Bryan Stone <Bryan@cominodev.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 22, 2025 10:27:18 AM
To: Deborah Stuart <deborahs@mason.mi.us>; Paul Pratt <PPratt@ingham.org>
Cc: Deborah Stuart <deborahs@mason.mi.us>
Subject: Re: Drain Question Mason Area

Paul,

I hope this email finds you well. Following up on the chain below to see if you have any availability later this week or early next week to get together. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or need any additional information in the meantime. Have a great rest of your morning.

Date: Wednesday, October 29, 2025 at 8:58:24 AM Eastern Daylight Time
From: Bryan Stone
To: Paul Pratt, Deborah Stuart
CC: Deborah Stuart

Drain
4 of 6

Paul,

I hope this email finds you well. Following up on the chain below to see what your availability looks like. I am hoping to be in town tomorrow but could also meet in person next Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday (with slight preference for Wednesday/Thursday). Let me know if any of those days work on your end and I can circulate a calendar invite. Looking forward to meeting with you.

All the best,

Bryan

Bryan Matthew Stone | Managing Principal
Comino (Community Innovation Development Partners)
5195 Hampsted Village Center Way, 253
New Albany, Ohio 43054
[216.831.4710](tel:216.831.4710) | bryan@cominodev.com

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From: Bryan Stone <Bryan@cominodev.com>
Date: Thursday, October 23, 2025 at 10:06 AM
To: Paul Pratt <PPratt@ingham.org>, Deborah Stuart <deborahs@mason.mi.us>
Cc: Deborah Stuart <deborahs@mason.mi.us>
Subject: Re: Drain Question Mason Area

Drain
5 of 6

Thursday, November 20, 2025 at 14:39:22 Eastern Standard Time

Subject: Relocation of the Drain steps

Date: Thursday, October 23, 2025 at 11:45:58 AM Eastern Daylight Time

From: Angelica Cosman

To: Paul Pratt

CC: Carla Clos

For relocation of Drain:

Listed below are the minimum steps involved in relocating a section of drain. Additional steps may be required as conditions warrant.

Step 1: Landowner provides requested engineering plan and profile;

Step 2: ICDC engineers determine if the Landowner's plan and profile meets the ICDC development standards and is feasible for the property and non-detrimental to the operation and future maintenance of the Drain (if not, it goes back to Landowner's engineer for revisions);

Step 3: Landowner's engineer prepares draft exhibits for agreement, easement, and release of old easement;

A. Legal description of the parent parcel;

B. Legal description and depiction of the route and course of the new drain section to be added;

C. Revised route and course of the entire drain with the new drain section added;

D. Legal description and depiction of the new easement area;

E. Legal description and depiction of the old easement area to be released (including reference to the Liber/Page of the old easement)

Step 4: ICDC engineers determine sufficiency of the exhibits;

Step 5: Landowner's engineer prepares certificate that the drain relocation is practicable (form provided by ICDC);

Step 6: ICDC counsel drafts Agreement to establish the new drain;

Step 7: ICDC counsel drafts new Easement;

Step 8: ICDC staff reviews/approves Agreement and Easement;

Step 9: Landowner signs, and pays any additional required fees that may be owed for the 433 Agreement and new Easement;

Step 10: 433 Agreement and new Easement are recorded with the Ingham County Register of Deeds;

Step 11: Landowner's engineer applies for and obtains a soil erosion and sedimentation control permit from the Meridian Township for construction of the relocated Drain; a copy of SESC permit to be provided to Drain Office;

Step 12: New drain is constructed by Landowner's contractor, with ICDC staff as inspector;

Step 13: Landowner's engineer provides as-built drawings of the new drain (and provides updated route and course and other necessary documents if route as relocated does not match the plans);

Step 14: ICDC counsel drafts Notice of Intent to Release Excess Easement, providing statutory 30-day protest period;

Step 15: Upon payment of all outstanding invoices (including for ICDC staff and consultants) Drain Commissioner approves/signs Notice of Intent, which is published in newspaper;

Step 16: ICDC counsel drafts Release of Excess Easement;

Step 17: After 30-day protest period expires, Drain Commissioner signs Release of Excess Easement;

Step 18: Release of Excess Easement is recorded with the Ingham County Register of Deeds.

Please be advised that this list is not intended to be an exhaustive list of steps.

Date: Monday, November 24, 2025 at 3:15:40 PM Eastern Standard Time
From: Paul Pratt
To: Bryan@cominodev.com
CC: Angelica Cosman, Carla Clos, Patrick E Lindemann
Attachments: SKM_C554e25112014430.pdf

Drain
log b

Bryan Stone, Cominodev

Good afternoon, Mr. Stone!

Your proposed land use in Vevay Township, which you choose not to disclose, would require rerouting of an open county drain on the property you are acquiring. The Drain Code provides a process for a property owner to reroute a county drain at the owner's expense, when done with engineering adequate to maintain the drain's capacity as prescribed by the Drain Commissioner. The site development must still comply with the Drain Commissioner's Standards and applicable requirements of the County's MS4 Permit from EGLE. Attached is a list of the minimum steps involved in relocating a section of drain.

As I told you, rerouting of a stream such as this drain is subject to approval by EGLE and possibly the US Army Corps of Engineers. Such approval(s) often are time-consuming. When you are ready to discuss the project in detail, please contact us for a conceptual review meeting. It may be helpful for you to consult the County website (www.ingham.org) for our Request for Services form and supporting forms that describe the permits required for projects affecting county drains. Our Standards are also found on that website.

Please let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Paul C. Pratt, Ingham County Deputy Drain Commissioner
ppratt@ingham.org
(517) 676-8391 (desk, transcribes to email)

June 17

From: Deborah Stuart <deborahs@mason.mi.us>

Sent: Tuesday, June 17, 2025 3:27 PM

To: admin <admin@newalbanyohio.org>

Subject: City Manager Inquiry on Economic Development

Creating a DEVELOPMENT
PROJECT, not an M3 ordinance.
Motive makes a BIG Difference
in what is Created!

Mr. Stefanov

Greetings from Michigan!

We are working on a development project that you have had some similar experience with, and you appear to have a similar size to our community. I was wondering if you were willing to chat, so I can get your insights and anticipate some of the items we may need to mitigate. If so, please let me know your availability next week, and I will do my best to accommodate. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Deborah Stuart

City Manager, City of Mason

201 West Ash Street | Mason, MI 48854-0370

Office: 517.676.5242 | Mobile: [REDACTED]

deborahs@mason.mi.us

For scheduling assistance: danam@mason.mi.us

Website: www.mason.mi.us

✱ Remember: Official Interest was stated as happening in FALL 2025 (see the original website's screenshot) THIS email is from June 17, 2025.

Have questions and not sure where to start? Contact our Customer Service Desk for assistance with all your community needs at 517.676.9155 or info@mason.mi.us

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New Albany
2 of 3

From: Deborah Stuart <deborahs@mason.mi.us>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 9:49 AM
To: Christopher Christian <cchristian@newalbanyohio.org>; Alicia McGovern <amcgovern@newalbanyohio.org>
Cc: Allison Criger <acriger@newalbanyohio.org>; Dana Martin <danam@mason.mi.us>; Deborah Stuart <deborahs@mason.mi.us>
Subject: Re: City Manager Inquiry on Economic Development Experience

Greetings:

Thank you so much for your willingness to discuss your approach. Our team has reviewed your ordinance as they are working to develop ours. We anticipate working with only one or two data center developers and limiting growth beyond that, so ours will likely be much more limited, but we want to make sure we don't miss a critical element in yours that you have identified when refining ours. We did have a few elected officials visit New Albany last week and they were very impressed by what you have accomplished and the buffering that we would like to model.

To make the meeting more productive, I wanted to share the questions of our group in advance:

1. What was the strategy and intent of creating the TMD district with the large land area minimum requirement?
2. How was the TMD acreage minimum number derived?
3. How was the Flagship acreage minimum number derived?
4. TMD allows most uses in the LI district, yet the surrounding property appears to be zoned GE, including an area with a DC in the GE district. Why does TMD reference LI but not GE?
5. Why create TMD when it appears a large DC is located in the GE district already (Sidecat LLC property owner)?
6. Was the Sidecat DC development subjected to the same development standards as required in TMD?
7. What is the strategy of using Flagship and Primary project designations in TMD?
8. Is there a maximum building height standard in TMD?
9. Are the larger setback and buffering/screening standards in TMD applied to both Flagship and Primary projects?
10. The New Albany Technology Manufacturing District Landscape and Architecture Standards Plan does not appear to set any architecture standards, only street/landscape standards?
11. Is the submittal/approval process for a Flagship project handled administratively or through the planning commission? It appears the normal city submittal/approval process is used for Primary projects but that Flagship projects are handled differently.
12. Is there any correlation between how the TMD is structured and a typical non-residential subdivision or plat process?
13. This district is specifically designed for the Technology industry. Was the TMD created to incentivize/attract Technology investment based upon industry research and history of investment in other areas of New Albany or developer drive

If you could provide some available times that would work for you and/or whomever else, you would want to attend. We are hoping to complete and present the ordinance by the end of October, so we will work around whatever times that you provide. Looping in my assistant Dana Martin, to assist

December 2025
After Sold Interested made Nov
September 2026

As we've seen with Mason's M3 project development, D. Stuart prefers handling it administratively (bypassing the planning commission)

Interesting question since the City Manager & Mayor have said multiple times that Mason is not trying to attract Data Centers, only protect us "if" one decides to come.

[This email was sent in 9/2026]

New Albany
3 of 3

From: Dana Martin <danam@mason.mi.us>
Sent: Thursday, October 2, 2025 9:48 AM
To: Allison Criger <acriger@newalbanyohio.org>
Subject: Re: City Manager Inquiry on Economic Development Experience

Good morning, Allison,
Tuesday, October 7, 4-5pm is great!

Scheduling the
Virtual Meeting

Thank you for sending out the calendar invite and link. Please send the invite to
deborahs@mason.mi.us.

Thank you,

Dana M. Martin

Executive Assistant & Communications Specialist

City of Mason | 201 West Ash Street | Mason, MI 48854-0370

Direct: 517.676.5891; Email: danam@mason.mi.us

Website: www.mason.mi.us

Re: City Manager Inquiry on Economic Development Experience

From: Joseph Stefanov <jstefanov@newalbanyohio.org>
Date: Wed 10/8/2025 6:56 AM
To: Christopher Christian <cchristian@newalbanyohio.org>

Thank you Chris.

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S20 FE 5G, an AT&T 5G smartphone
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

From: Christopher Christian <cchristian@newalbanyohio.org>
Sent: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 7:49:36 PM
To: Joseph Stefanov <jstefanov@newalbanyohio.org>
Cc: Jennifer Chrysler <jchrysler@newalbanyohio.org>
Subject: Fw: City Manager Inquiry on Economic Development Experience

Hi Joe,

I met with the mayor, city manager, and community development director of Mason, Michigan this afternoon to discuss data center/business park zoning. We had a good conversation, and I offered to continue meeting with them as they develop their new zoning code.

Thank you,

Data Center

The Mayor
City Manager
Community
Development
Director
Elizabeth
Hade

"Development firm behind proposed Mason data center identified"

Portrait of Susan VelaSusan Vela

Lansing State Journal 8/21/2026

MASON — The company that wants to develop a hyperscale data center on more than 400 acres near Mason has been identified as Ohio-based Comino Development, records show.

Correspondence between officials in the Ingham County Drain Commissioner's office, Mason City Manager Deb Stuart and a Comino Development official were initially obtained from Ingham County by a local resident and subsequently by the State Journal.

The documents identify Comino Development, an acronym for Community Innovation Development Partners, but not the eventual end user of the proposed project. Comino Development is based in New Albany, Ohio, a city that has more than 15 companies including Google, Meta and Microsoft running more than 40 facilities for the data center industry.

Stuart and Mason Mayor Russell Whipple have said they don't know the end user of any potential data center.

Stuart declined to discuss Comino or Bryan Stone, Comino's managing principal who has been vetting a large parcel in Vevay Township on the northeast corner of College and West Columbia roads. However, emails show Stuart has been in communication with Stone since October of 2025.

Stone, with Stuart's help records show, inquired in October of 2025 to Ingham County officials about a county drain that cuts across the site of the proposed data center. Paul Pratt, Ingham County's deputy drain commissioner, responded by writing in a Nov. 24, 2025 email, "your proposed land use in Vevay Township, which you chose not to disclose, would require rerouting of an open county drain on the property you are acquiring."

And Whipple said he and two other Mason officials visited New Albany, Ohio, to check out its data centers, and Stone helped guide their visit. Whipple did not say who else from Mason took the trip.

Comino Development's involvement is the latest twist in a controversy in the small Ingham County community sparked by the data center proposal and which has led to protests at council meetings, recall efforts and a packed race for City Council seats in November. The dispute has pitted city, school district and other officials who argue the area needs the massive influx of tax dollars a data center would bring against township officials and residents who don't want rural farmland used by a data center.

No one at Comino Development answered the phone listed for the company's New Albany, Ohio office on Aug. 20 and Aug. 21, and messages left by the State Journal were not returned.

Stuart in a phone interview with the State Journal declined to discuss any information about Comino or the development, saying doing so could subject her or the city to liability. She did confirm Comino is not the end user and that "it's pretty standard for large development processes to have a site selector or a land developer first."

She told the State Journal she has not signed an NDA, or non-disclosure agreement, in connection with the project.

"The key thing to note is we get private inquiries about due diligence all the time," she said. "There are things at the city we cannot share when a private development is still in negotiations and this one still is in negotiations."

Whipple said Stuart was approached about a potential data center in late 2024, talks became serious by spring 2025 and he learned of Stone after that.

Whipple said Stone and his company try to find land for business projects.

"Bryan has been in contact with the city manager for quite some time. Which we've admitted in public 50 times," he said. "This is nothing new. I don't know what the big hullabaloo is, other than the fact that people know the name of somebody who's been inquiring about buying property."

Whipple also defended the trip to see New Albany's data centers and Stone, which was made before Mason officials introduced a now-repealed ordinance designed to strengthen data center regulations in the city.

"He is someone who works in the data center business, at least on the acquisition side and the development side," Whipple said about Stone. "He had knowledge of what was going on in New Albany, so we drove down there. There's no ulterior motive. It's called due diligence. It's called good governance. It's called being responsible. We wanted to gain as much information as we could."

Patrick Dolton, a 48-year-old Aurelius Township resident who lives less than a mile from the proposed site, received the 10 pages of correspondence after filing a late July Freedom of Information Act request, asking for, among several related requests, "correspondence (including emails and letters) relating to the proposed data center development and the Aurelius-Vevay Drain."

While the public records don't reveal an end-user, they do reveal another wrinkle in a proposed development that is likely facing years of red tape.

Pratt wrote to Stone that rerouting the Aurelius and Vevay Drain on the property would be a time-consuming process, and the proposed project is already facing lengthy timelines related to annexation of the land from the township to the city.

In June, Vevay Township trustees rejected a conditional land use transfer proposal and tax-sharing agreement that could have netted the township at least \$1 million a year for 30 years.

Another attorney, Alan Greene of Dykema Gossett PLLC in Bloomfield Hills, has also been in communication with Mason officials. He indicated to city officials in February that he represented a client who is "evaluating sites" for a potential hyperscale data center development in or near the city. However, earlier this month he filed a request with the State Boundary Commission on behalf of four sets of property owners of the 400-plus acres to annex the township land to Mason. That annexation process requires three independent meetings of the State Boundary Commission over 12 to 24 months to be completed, according to Emily Fitzgerald, spokeswoman for the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs.

Greene declined comment.

Pratt told the State Journal he does not know the name of any potential end user of the proposed development. It's unlikely the Aurelius-Vevay Drain, which stretches 3.5 miles in both Aurelius and Vevay

townships and sits in a drain district of more than 2,000 acres, could be rerouted - if that's the plan - until after there's a decision on the annexation. The real end users would have to be known to start such a project, he said.

It kind of goes from side to side. It kind of curves across the landscape," Pratt said of the drain.

Pratt explained state and possibly federal agencies would have to be involved.

"As I told you, rerouting of a stream such as this drain is subject to approval by EGLE and possibly the US Army Corps of Engineers. Such approval(s) are often time-consuming," Pratt wrote to Stone in October of 2025.

The drain, Stone wrote that same month, is a "critical" issue for the proposed project.

"Deborah is very much correct in saying the drain has become a critical issue on our end and I would love to have the chance to meet with you in person to walk you through where we are in our process and learn more about some of the different options that might be available," Stone wrote to Pratt on Oct 20.

Dolton, who has lived in the Mason area most of his life, said he learned over social media last spring about a data center possibly moving into the northwest corner of Vevay Township. He lives about a mile away, on a lake surrounded by farm fields.

"Not a lot of people were talking about the drain that I know runs through that property," he said. "I know how important drains are out here. I also know the Aurelius-Vevay Drain has other drains going into it.

When he filed his public records request, he also asked for engineering reports, hydrology and drainage studies, stormwater management plans, environmental reports, and much more. The county did not charge him, he said, for a response that included the correspondence as well as a extensive list of individual PDF files.

"I'm worried that the landscape would change super soon," Dolton said. "I would like a plan or an idea before annexation. It doesn't make much sense to say, 'Yes, you can control or take ownership or governance or whatever you want to call it over this piece of property without a plan of rerouting that drain first.

"What if they just get it. It's a county drain, so the city wouldn't really have all that much control. Wouldn't they need to have a plan in place of how to reroute it before they even know if they can build there and if they can't build there why would they want to annex it in the first place or allow the annexation?"

Dolton and other residents remain upset, which is evident in social media activity and at packed council sessions.

In the application to the State Boundary Commission that Greene submitted, he wrote that "The development proposed for the Property to be annexed is a world-class hyperscale data center campus (the 'Project') representing a capital investment of approximately \$1 billion," Greene wrote. "Once operational, each phase is anticipated to employ approximately 30 to 90 personnel, with an additional 100 to 200 third-party employees and service providers including security, facilities management, food service, maintenance, and other support functions visiting or working at the site on a daily basis.

Some of the selling points Greene made in his pitch to the commission was the tax revenue benefits for the city, and he noted Mason is facing a \$28 million project to replace its wastewater treatment plant and steep

drain assessments levied by the county drain commissioner. Mason currently collects about \$5.2 million a year in property taxes, and its tax base is 66% single-family homes and 7% tied to the auto industry. The data center is expected to generate between \$8.4 million and \$12.6 million annually for the city.

He also noted local schools, including Mason Public Schools and the Ingham Intermediate School District, would see a "transformative" impact from an increase in local property taxes.

Greene argued there would be little impact on Vevay Township, which gets about \$1,100 annually in taxes from the property on which seven residents live, all of whom are prepared to move.

Greene made the request to the State Boundary Commission on behalf of the land owners, which records show include Chellison's Enterprise's LLC, including members Peter and Michael Hall (3146 and 3388 W. Columbia roads, about 398 acres), Patricia Hall, a trustee for the Hall Family Trust (202 N. College Road, 3.5 acres), Gerald and Cheryl Howe (232 N. College Road, 1.97 acres) and David and Joan Jones (260 N. College Road, 1.97 acres). All requested the State Boundary Commission annex the acreage into the city of Mason.

A town hall meeting is planned to hear residents concerns on the proposed project in September.

"I can't say that I feel better," Dolton said. "Honestly, I'm scared of (the data center) going in, and I'm scared of what it's going to do to the water supply around here, the electricity bills. The housing market, what it's going to do, the value of everything.

"I also know that – data centers - they're going to be evolving and advancing over the next five to 10 years. This data center might be obsolete in five years and the city of Mason won't even ask for a surety bond. It's almost like they're just trying to push this thing through real quick."

Contact editor Susan Vela at svela@lsj.com or 248-873-7044. Follow her on Twitter @susanvela.

~ Paula Caltrider