
INDEPENDENT CASE STUDY

Goochland County, Virginia

A Data Center Case Study

The Overlay, the Lawsuit, and the Template

Goochland

Prepared by Tommy N. Turner

Williamsburg and Christiansburg, Virginia

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CASE STUDY: GOOCHLAND COUNTY

The Overlay, the Lawsuit, and the Template

Series: Companion to What Virginia Is Spending, What Virginia Is Getting (v4.0)

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Author: Tommy N. Turner

Location: Williamsburg and Christiansburg, Virginia

Contact: 757-784-0979 · tommy@gofast.pro · [linkedin.com/in/tommyturner](https://www.linkedin.com/in/tommyturner)

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Companion case studies in this series:

Case Study: Henrico County — How Two Neighborhoods Forced Virginia's Second-Largest Data Center Jurisdiction to Change Course

Case Study: Hanover County — Mountain Road, Tract, and the Search for Leverage

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Case Study: Prince William County — Governance Capture, the Revolving Door, and the Democratic Correction

Case Study: Chesterfield County — Google, CFS, and the Industrial Corridor (draft)

Case Study: The Google-CFS Power Purchase Agreement

Version note: v1.0 is the first published version of this case study. The central litigation is active: the circuit court's May 26, 2026 ruling on the legislative record is seventeen days old at this evidence snapshot, the first application filed under the challenged ordinance is two days old, and the demurrer hearing is set for October 20, 2026, inside the project's fieldwork window. Research framework references follow the series role-label convention.

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ABSTRACT

Every county documented in this series so far decided data centers project by project. Goochland County tried something different. On November 6, 2025, after a public hearing at Goochland High School that ran past midnight, the Board of Supervisors voted 4-1 to adopt a Technology Overlay District and a companion Technology Zone: roughly 4,400 acres pre-zoned for data centers and related uses along Route 288 from Interstate 64 to Patterson Avenue, with by-right approval in most of the district, financial incentives layered on top, and a use table that includes small modular nuclear reactors by conditional use permit. No speaker at the hearing supported it. Twenty-eight days later, four residents sued, alleging the county adopted the ordinance on defective notice and changed it materially the night of the vote. The county has budgeted \$250,000 to defend it. On May 26, 2026, the circuit court rejected the county's attempt to file all 8,500 pages of its adoption record and ordered a pared-down set; the demurrer will be argued October 20, 2026. While the case is pending, the corridor is moving. On June 10, 2026, Tract, the developer Hanover rejected two weeks earlier, filed the district's first application: a twelve-building data center campus on roughly 900 acres. And the instrument is spreading. New Kent County is drafting its own version, the third iteration of a template Louisa County invented in 2023.

This case study treats the overlay itself as the protagonist: an institutional instrument with a design history, an adoption story, a legal test, and a replication path. The legal test is the part that matters most for the series. The plaintiffs do not argue that data centers are bad. They argue the county broke the rules adopting the district, and the question their suit poses is whether pre-entitlement by ordinance moves faster than the democratic and judicial checks built to answer it. The evidence so far says yes: the first campus application is in the pipeline on an administrative clock while the ordinance it depends on awaits a hearing on a docket clock. The study adds a fifth position to the series' institutional spectrum. Henrico reformed after entitling. Hanover refused case by case. Chesterfield contracted its leverage away. Prince William's governance was captured, then corrected. Goochland pre-entitled by ordinance, wholesale, and is being tested in court on process rather than substance.

PURPOSE, SCOPE, AND METHOD

This case study documents the conception, adoption, legal challenge, and early operation of Goochland County's Technology Overlay District and Technology Zone, from the county's economic development planning in 2024 through the evidence snapshot of June 12, 2026. It is the series' first new-territory case, built from the record up rather than from a prior draft, and its most time-sensitive: the central litigation is active and the report's claims about it are dated precisely for that reason.

The primary intended readers are the principal investigators and consultants of the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation study on the energy implications of data center expansion in Georgia, Virginia, and Tennessee, an interdisciplinary team whose work spans ethnographic and institutional analysis, environmental and distributional justice, energy geography, utility finance, and energy labor studies.[1] Following project convention, this document refers to the team's research frameworks by type of work rather than by individual researcher. The Goochland record offers each framework something the project-by-project cases cannot: the institutional behavior framework gets a county that moved the approval decision from the future to the past, converting case-by-case discretion into a standing entitlement; the distributional justice framework gets an opposition that is partly extraterritorial, people who cannot vote for the board that decided; the utility finance framework gets a pricing regime set before any facility operates, against a regional repricing wave moving the other way; and the energy geography framework gets its diffusion story operating at the level of ordinances rather than projects. These connections are flagged inline and consolidated in Part Twelve. The document is written to serve as a pre-field site dossier for the project's October 2026 fieldwork: the demurrer hearing on October 20 falls inside that window, and Part Thirteen identifies the FOIA targets and courtroom records the field visit should capture.

The second audience is Virginia localities now studying the Goochland template, beginning with New Kent. The third is citizens and journalists seeking to understand what a technology overlay district is, what it permits, and what challenging one requires.

A note on method. This study is built entirely from public sources: the adopted ordinances and county documents, circuit court coverage, state code and case law, census and budget data, and sustained local news coverage, principally Richmond BizSense, VPM News, WTVR, WRIC, NBC12, the Virginia Mercury, Virginia Business, Cardinal News, and the Goochland-focused civic blog Goochland on my mind. Direct quotations are reproduced as reported in the cited coverage. No interviews were conducted for this version. The complaint itself is posted by the county only as a non-searchable scan, so the pleading's contents are reported here

through news accounts and flagged accordingly. Claims that rest on secondary sources rather than primary documents are marked with an asterisk and consolidated in Part Thirteen with the primary source identified for verification. A standing discipline governs the litigation sections: the case is pending, the plaintiffs' allegations are allegations, the county's defenses are defenses, and the May 26 ruling is a ruling about the record, not the merits. Both sides' positions are stated in their own terms. The companion report, What Virginia Is Spending, What Virginia Is Getting (v4.0), covers the statewide fiscal picture.[2]

PART ONE: THE COUNTY AND THE CORRIDOR

Goochland County runs west from the Henrico County line along the north bank of the James River, about 290 square miles of rolling horse-and-hay country with a courthouse village at its center. The Weldon Cooper Center estimates its July 1, 2025 population at 28,432, up from 24,727 at the 2020 Census, growth concentrated almost entirely in the county's eastern end.[3] The real estate tax rate is \$0.53 per \$100 and has not moved in years; the adopted FY2027 budget totals roughly \$171 million all funds.[4] It is a small government. The county attorney's office told the board in February 2026 that it lacked the staff to defend a single major lawsuit, and the FY2026 budget's headline personnel investment was thirteen new positions countywide.[5][6]

The eastern end is different country. West Creek Business Park, roughly 3,500 acres south of I-64 along the Route 288 corridor, has carried business zoning since a 1987 rezoning that included by-right data center use, decades before anyone wanted it.*[7] Its tenants are the county's fiscal anchors: Capital One, CarMax, Performance Food Group. In September 2025, Eli Lilly announced a \$5 billion pharmaceutical manufacturing facility on a 227-acre Markel-owned site on West Creek Parkway, 650 permanent jobs, the largest single investment in county history.[8] Around the park's western edge, the growth machine meets subdivisions: Readers Branch, a 300-plus home community bordering an industrially zoned West Creek parcel; Mosaic at West Creek, a 55-and-over community; the Richmond Country Club. East across Route 288 sits Henrico's Short Pump, close enough that Goochland's land-use choices land in another county's living rooms.

Water and sewer in this corridor run through the Tuckahoe Creek Service District, created in 2002 and funded by a \$0.32 ad valorem surtax on real estate within the district. The county's water comes from Henrico under a contract currently providing 5.25 million gallons per day, with ultimate contractual capacity of 25 MGD; wastewater agreements run to Henrico and Richmond.[9] The geography of the arrangement matters: the infrastructure that would supply any data center buildout in the corridor is purchased from the county whose residents showed up to oppose that buildout.

The fiscal motive behind everything that follows is stated plainly in the county's own materials. The board set tax-base diversification as a priority at a January 2024 special meeting, and the stated target is a 70/30 residential-to-business revenue split.[10] Board chair Tom Winfree put the logic on the record the night of the adoption vote: "Increasing revenue from commercial sources allows us to meet the future needs of our community without the need to balance the budget on the backs of the homeowners through real estate tax increases." [7] Goochland had already

placed its bet on the data center sector specifically. In April 2019, with no controversy and little notice, the county created a separate business personal property classification for data center equipment at \$0.40 per \$100, against \$3.75 for ordinary business equipment, “to promote further investment in this market sector.”[11] The rate, now \$0.44, was the quiet predicate. The overlay was the loud one.

PART TWO: THE INSTRUMENT — LOUISA’S PRECURSOR

The technology overlay district as a Virginia instrument was invented one county to the northwest. In April 2023, Louisa County adopted Ordinance 2023-6 by a 6-1 vote, creating a Technology Overlay District codified at County Code §§ 86-330 through 86-334.[12][13] A citation correction is owed here: earlier work in this series, including the Hanover case study’s standards comparison, cited the Louisa TOD as “§ 86-455.” That section is a corner-lot provision. The TOD provisions, including the 65/60 dBA noise standard the series has tabled against other jurisdictions, sit at §§ 86-330 through 86-334, and the comparison tables in this report use the corrected citation.[12]

Louisa’s design established the template’s architecture: an overlay the board can lay over any underlying zoning by ordinance and map amendment, minimum contiguous acreage (125 acres in Louisa), required proximity to 115kV-or-greater transmission, design and buffer standards (200 feet from residential, 300 from agricultural in Louisa’s current text), a noise ceiling, and a cap on total district size of one percent of county land.[12] The original 2023 ordinance made data centers a by-right use inside the overlay. The sequence that followed is the part Goochland should have studied hardest. Four months after adoption, Louisa announced an \$11 billion, two-campus Amazon Web Services deal inside the district.[14] Resident concern arrived after the commitment, not before. In August 2024 the county retrofitted a conditional use permit requirement onto the district’s principal uses (Ordinance 2024-11), and in 2024 it shrank the district’s footprint.[12][15] By 2025-2026 the county was fighting over the instrument itself: AWS withdrew a third-campus CUP under neighbor resistance in July 2025, bought roughly 1,925 acres including the same tract for \$72.45 million in January 2026, and a supervisor’s push to pull some 2,600 acres back out of the district stalled at the planning commission in February 2026 with no resolution as of this snapshot.[16][15]

Louisa’s arc, by-right invitation, anchor commitment, retrofit of discretion, rollback fight, is the template’s full life cycle observed once. Goochland adopted the template at the third stage of someone else’s cycle while reproducing the first stage’s design choice: data centers by right across most of its district. What Goochland added was a financial instrument Louisa never paired with its overlay (the Technology Zone incentives of Part Three), a use category no Virginia locality had zoned for (the small modular reactor provision), and an adoption fight that arrived before the anchor tenant rather than after. The energy geography framework should register the form of the diffusion: what spread from Louisa to Goochland was not a project, a developer, or a parcel of land. It was ordinance text.

PART THREE: THE ORDINANCE — WHAT THE TOD PERMITS AND THE TZ PAYS

The District

The adopted Technology Overlay District spans about five miles of the Route 288 corridor from I-64 south to Patterson Avenue: roughly 4,400 acres total, about 3,500 of them inside West Creek Business Park (controlled by Pruitt Associates), plus a roughly 900-acre western sub-area along Hockett Road, designated TOD West, owned in parts by members of the Haddock, Stern, and Arenstein families.*[17][7] The ordinance package consists of a comprehensive plan amendment (CP-2025-00002) and a zoning ordinance amendment (ZOA-2025-00001) adding Article 27.A, Sections 15-448 through 15-450, to the county code, with siting criteria requiring at least 100 contiguous acres and proximity to 115kV-or-greater transmission.[18] The parallel Technology Zone ordinance (No. 6453) amends Chapter 8, adding Sections 8-100 through 8-106 under the authority of Virginia Code § 58.1-3850.[19]

The Use Table

Inside the overlay, data centers are a by-right use, processed administratively through a conceptual master plan and plan of development, with no public hearing per project. The exception is TOD West, where data centers require a conditional use permit. Also by right: technology R&D, advanced manufacturing, technology schools and training centers, transmission substations, and energy storage meeting distance and chemistry conditions. Utility generating stations, defined to include natural gas peaking plants and small modular nuclear reactor facilities under 300 megawatts electric, require a conditional use permit anywhere in the district.[18] The SMR provision made Goochland the first Virginia locality to write nuclear generation into a data center zoning instrument, a distinction Cardinal News framed as a test of public acceptance for the technology.[20] Part Six runs that thread to ground; the short version is that the reactor exists in the use table and nowhere else.

The Data Center Standards

The standards in Section 15-449 are the county's answer to the question every opponent asked: what protects the people already there. Data centers on industrial base zoning must sit at least 300 feet from residentially zoned property, with a 250-foot vegetated buffer where adjacent to non-industrial property; on agricultural base zoning the setback is 500 feet, reducible to 300 by CUP. Noise is capped at 55 dBA and 65 dBC measured at the property line adjacent to residential, with a third-party noise study required at plan of development, again within three months of operations, and on demand up to four times a year. Generator operation is prohibited except for testing (two hours a day, weekdays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., on a published

schedule) and defined emergencies; generators must be Tier 4 certified low-emission diesel, shielded by a principal building, enclosed, walled, and screened by berms installed before any structures rise. Height is capped at 120 feet, with an 80-foot ceiling adjacent to residential or agricultural property and step-back and sprinkler requirements above 60 feet. Public water and sewer are mandatory. Construction near residential is limited to weekdays, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.[18]

The county's framing of these standards is the strongest version of its case for the whole enterprise: "Prior to the adoption of the TOD, data centers could have located as close as 50-feet to residentially zoned property with very limited buffers and no sound protections. Under the adopted TOD, data centers are now required to be located a minimum of 300-feet with sound, visual, and height protections." [21] The claim is true as far as it goes. West Creek's 1987 zoning really did allow by-right data centers with minimal buffers, and Readers Branch really was 50 feet of setback away from that entitlement.*[22] The opponents' counter, developed across Part Four, is that the county packaged the protections with a vast enlargement of where the entitlement applies, and adopted the package in a way that is now in front of a judge.

How the Standards Table Regionally

Jurisdiction / instrument	Setback from residential	Noise at property line	Generator standard	Approval posture
Goochland TOD (Nov. 2025)	300 ft (500 ft on agric. base)	55 dBA / 65 dBC	Tier 4 diesel, enclosed, bermed, tested 2 hrs/day max	By right (CUP in TOD West)
Louisa TOD §§ 86-330-334 (as amended 2024)	200 ft buffer (300 ft agric.)	65 dBA day / 60 night	Not specified in district standards	CUP (retrofitted 2024)
Hanover (Mountain Road proffers, final)	200-300 ft buffers	57/52 dBA (county ordinance)	Tier IV, testing 8-4 weekdays	Case-by-case; rejected 4-3
Chesterfield ZOMod (Jan. 2026)	725 ft	75/65 dB	Conditional	CUP required
Prince William (Tier 3 draft)	1,320 ft	DEQ Tier 4	Decommissioning escrow	SUP
Loudoun ZOAM-2024-0001 (Mar. 2025)	500 ft	Phase 2 pending	Phase 2 pending	SPEX required

Sources: adopted Goochland TOD ordinance; corrected Louisa code citation; companion Hanover case study (proffer record); Chesterfield ZOMod; PWC Sustainability Commission draft; Loudoun ZOAM.[18][12][23]

Read down the table and Goochland’s standards are middling: tighter than Louisa’s noise ceiling, looser than Chesterfield’s and Prince William’s setbacks. Read across the last column and Goochland is alone. Every other jurisdiction attaches its standards to a discretionary act it can still refuse. Goochland attached its standards to an entitlement it has already granted. The standards are the price of admission the county set; what the county gave up is the power to refuse the admission.

The Technology Zone

The Technology Zone is the overlay’s checkbook. For up to ten years, a “qualified technology business” can receive reimbursement of up to 75 percent of building

permit fees and up to 100 percent of utility connection fees, paid after investment and job thresholds are verified, with amounts scaled to estimated economic impact. The board may add discretionary incentives by performance agreement. Qualification requires five full-time jobs and \$500,000 of capital investment for a new business, two net new jobs and \$100,000 for an existing one, with wages at twice the federal minimum.[19] These are fee reimbursements rather than tax abatements; the data center equipment rate of Part Seven is a separate, countywide classification, and the ordinance expressly leaves the Tuckahoe Creek surtax intact. For the distributional justice framework, the structure of the package matters: the incentives flow to firms meeting investment thresholds, the buffers and noise ceilings flow to adjacent residents, and the two groups are not the same people. Who lives along the corridor and who collects the reimbursements is an empirical question Part Twelve assigns to fieldwork.

The TZ ordinance also contains the adoption story's first procedural footnote: its own public hearing was advertised for October 7, 2025, then deferred by board motion to November 6 "so that this ordinance could be heard in tandem with the Technology Overlay District ordinance." [19] The tandem hearing is why both instruments share a midnight birthday.

PART FOUR: THE ADOPTION

Four Months, Two Town Halls, a Midnight Hearing

The public arc ran 122 days. The county introduced the proposals at a community meeting on July 7, 2025.[21] By early August the reaction had forced a schedule change: County Administrator Jeremy Raley announced that the planning commission hearing set for August 21 would move to September “after hearing public outcry,” with opposition concentrated in Readers Branch, where the original draft would have allowed a data center under 80 feet within 50 feet of the subdivision’s edge.*[22] A second community meeting on September 8 drew around 700 people.*[24] The county also held two town halls and a circuit of HOA meetings; the town hall dates do not appear in county postings and are a verification item.[21]

The planning commission heard the case over two nights. On September 18, several hundred citizens filled Goochland High School and the commission voted 4-1 to continue to a second session; on September 25 it voted 3-2 to recommend approval. [18][25] Commissioners Jess McLaughlin, Dwain Cosby, and Curt Pituck voted yes; Amanda Kowalski and Guy Kemmerly voted no, with Kemmerly making the motion that attached four recommended conditions (CUP-only energy generation, a 500-foot setback on agricultural base zoning, an 80-foot by-right height cap adjacent to residential, and lower decibel limits) and then voting against the result.*[25] WRIC’s headline verb was “narrowly advances.”[26] The testimony that night supplied the adoption fight’s most quoted lines. A speaker for the Mosaic at West Creek HOA: “We cannot be half community and half an industrial park. We cannot be half a safe haven for families and half a sacrifice zone for economic development.” Another resident, reaching for the worst available analogy for the nuclear provision: “We will probably not be known as Chernobyl on the James, but please remember the choice we have.”*[24]

On October 20-21 the county posted revised ordinances incorporating the commission’s conditions: no by-right energy generation anywhere in the district, no by-right data centers in TOD West, noise lowered to 55 dBA with a new 65 dBC limit, the 500-foot agricultural setback, the 80-foot adjacency cap, mandatory public water, no access through residential streets.[27] Those late-October postings defined the version the public was noticed to hear on November 6. What changed after them is the subject of the lawsuit.

The hearing itself began at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 6, 2025, in the Goochland High School auditorium, and the vote came just after midnight. Roughly 350 residents attended. More than 80 people spoke in opposition over a comment period that BizSense timed at more than four hours and WTVR at three; the discrepancy is noted and the recording is the primary source.[7][28][29] No speaker

during the comment period supported the ordinance. A FOIA request by resident Stephen Levet had already established that the county received more than 1,000 emails on the proposal, the vast majority opposed.[30][31] Two Henrico supervisors crossed the county line to speak: Jody Rogish of Tuckahoe and Misty Roundtree of Three Chopt, whose districts abut the corridor. Roundtree's appeal to the board ran against type for an elected official addressing a neighboring jurisdiction: "This is a gift that every elected official would want to have... I implore you to not squander that gift." [31]

The Night-Of Changes

Two sets of changes entered the ordinance on the night of the vote. Staff presented amendments described in coverage as small wording changes plus a substantive clarification: where a data center is by-right under base zoning and the property adjoins residential, the TOD standards apply (adopted as Section 15-448.B(3)), along with a weekday limit on construction hours.[7][18] Supervisor Charlie Vaughters then moved floor amendments converting the generator sound-mitigation menu, which the October draft offered as options, into an all-of-the-above mandate for data centers adjacent to residential zoning: shielding by a principal building, enclosure, opaque sound-minimizing walls, berms installed before construction, and Tier 4 certified low-emission diesel units, plus a requirement that data centers on industrial base zoning comply with the enhanced TOD standards.[10][27]

Each change tightened the ordinance in residents' favor, which is the county's point. Each change also entered the text after the last published notice, which is the plaintiffs'. District 5 Supervisor Jonathan Lyle reacted in real time: "This is a lot, and please don't take this as criticism, but I would have liked to have seen this before tonight. This is a whole lot for me to take in." [7]

The Vote and the Reasons

Lyle moved to defer the decision to the board's regular July 2026 meeting; the motion died without a second. (BizSense and Virginia Business report the deferral target as July 2026; the Virginia Mercury characterized it as a one-year delay.) His subsequent amendment to remove TOD West from the district also died without a second. Vaughters moved approval, Neil Spoonhower seconded, and both ordinances passed 4-1.[7][10]

Supervisor	District	Vote	Stated position
Charlie Vaughters	4	Yes (moved both)	“Goochland has a chance to set and follow a higher standard for development, solidify and grow our county’s economy in ways never before imagined”
Tom Winfree	3 (2025 chair)	Yes	The 70/30 revenue goal; commercial revenue avoids “balanc[ing] the budget on the backs of the homeowners”
Neil Spoonhower	2	Yes (seconded TOD)	Process defense: “If this is back-dooring, it is the worst job of back-dooring a project that I have ever seen”
Jonathan Christy	1 (2026 chair; seconded TZ)	Yes	Individual reasoning not quoted in available coverage; meeting recording is the source
Jonathan Lyle	5	No	“We had a good product last night that could have been made better. And my no vote was a message”

Sources: county news release and recorded vote block in Ordinance 6453; BizSense, VPM, WTVR, NBC12, Virginia Mercury coverage.[10][19][7][31][29][32][28]

Vaughters described the process as the hardest of his tenure and his own posture in it memorably: “I had to take the cotton out of my ears and put it in my mouth during this process — listen, learn and compromise.”[31] Lyle’s no was a process vote, not

a substance vote; he has said the TOD “was seen as a tool, not the tool, but a tool, that would help us attract more industry,” and his stated objection was timing: “I think this could be better and I think time would have allowed us to do that.”[28] [32] Two record notes: VPM’s photo captions mislabel Lyle as the District 2 supervisor (the article text has District 5 correctly), and the Virginia Mercury renders the chair’s name as “Tim Winfree”; the county’s roster has Thomas.[31][28] [33] One more, with some bearing on a lawsuit about notice: the adopted TZ ordinance’s boilerplate recital locates the November 6 meeting “in the Goochland County Administration Building.” The county’s own hearing notice and every news account place it at Goochland High School.[19][27]

The Contract in the Background

The adoption fight ran alongside an unresolved question about what, specifically, the district was for. During the fall, an email from Lyle surfaced through a resident FOIA request asserting that a contract existed between the TOD West landowners and an unnamed developer for an eight-building data center campus of roughly two million square feet, contingent on the land’s inclusion in the district, and that other supervisors had received information he had not.*[34] The county’s response, on its own FAQ page, confirmed the outline: it “has been made aware of discussions between a private developer and several landowners regarding a contract for a potential data center project on approximately 900+ acres near Mosaic and Richmond Country Club along Hockett Road (TOD West),” adding that it learned of the discussions after they occurred.[35] At the November 6 hearing Lyle pressed the implication: if no data center deal hinged on passage that evening, he was not sure why a deferral was unacceptable.[7] Spoonhower’s “worst job of back-dooring” line was the rebuttal.

Seven months later, Tract filed its application for a twelve-building campus on approximately 900 acres of Haddock, Stern, and Arenstein land in TOD West (Part Six). The county never confirmed that the rumored 2025 counterparty was Tract, and this study does not assert it. The acreage, the ownership, and the location match.

PART FIVE: THE LAWSUIT

The Complaint

On December 4, 2025, twenty-eight days after adoption and inside the 30-day window Virginia Code § 15.2-2204(E) allows for advertisement-based challenges, four Goochland property owners sued the county, the Board of Supervisors, and the Planning Commission in Goochland County Circuit Court: Cynthia Haas, Peggy Knisley, Virginia H. Reed, and Gail A. Minnick.[5][36] Haas lives in a community immediately adjacent to land where the district now permits data centers.*[37] Their counsel is Phillip Strother of Strother Law Offices; an informal adviser, Goochland resident and former Maryland lawyer John Gessner, assists.*[38][17] The court file is posted by the county only as a scanned image, and no published source reports the case number; the pleading-level detail below rests on news accounts and is flagged accordingly.[39]

The complaint as filed pleaded nine counts seeking, principally, a declaration that the TOD and the related comprehensive plan and zoning amendments are null and void, plus legal fees.*[40][5] The reported allegations group into three theories. First, defective advertisement: the required notice was “wholly inadequate” and “confusingly defective,” and residents in and near the district were not properly notified, including a failure to properly identify affected properties.*[17][5] Second, substantive zoning defects: per the complaint as quoted by Virginia Business, “The TOD ordinance contains provisions authorizing certain uses without adequately objective standards, includes internal inconsistencies that fail to provide clear notice to landowners and administrators, and delegates broad discretion to county officials in the review and approval process.”[5] Third, the night-of changes: the adopted version “differed materially” from the version described in the county’s late-October published notices.*[17] Plaintiff Haas, describing the November 6 floor amendments: “Residents were given no advanced notice. Residents spoke at the November 6 meeting and said, ‘You guys can’t pass this tonight. You just added four additional things’... It didn’t matter to the county.”[17]

In spring 2026 the plaintiffs voluntarily withdrew Count VIII, which had alleged the adoption was arbitrary and capricious. Strother described the nonsuit as strengthening the case; County Administrator Jeremy Raley said the withdrawal “speaks to the work that the board and staff did.”[38] The strategic reading is worth recording: dropping the arbitrariness count abandons the deferential-review battlefield, where Virginia courts presume legislative validity, and concentrates the case on procedure, where no deference applies. A zoning ordinance adopted without the required notice is not owed the benefit of the doubt; under the controlling case law it is void.

The Legal Predicate

Virginia Code § 15.2-2204 requires two published notices before adoption, the first no more than 28 days and the second no less than five days before the meeting, with descriptive summary requirements; for map changes affecting more than 100 parcels, the advertisement may describe boundaries and link a map, and written mailed notice to affected and adjacent owners is required.[36] The controlling authority on what the notice must contain is *Glazebrook v. Board of Supervisors of Spotsylvania County* (2003): a citizen must be able to “reasonably determine, from the notice, whether he or she was affected by the proposed amendments,” a notice by reference must carry an accurate descriptive summary, and a notice that fails invalidates the proceedings that follow.*[41] The statute contains defenses the county can be expected to invoke: an inadvertent-failure savings clause for mailed notice, and a waiver provision under which actual notice of, or active participation in, the proceedings forfeits a written-notice challenge. The plaintiffs all participated in the proceedings they challenge; how the waiver provision interacts with their published-notice and material-change theories is exactly the kind of question the demurrer hearing exists to answer, and this study does not predict it.

The plaintiffs’ own template is recent and nearby. Their advertising theory tracks the Prince William Digital Gateway litigation, in which a circuit judge voided that rezoning in August 2025 over advertising non-compliance; the case is on appeal and is treated at length in the companion Prince William study.*[5] The institutional behavior framework should note what this borrowing means: the process challenge is itself now a replicable instrument, diffusing county to county along the same paths as the overlay.

The Defense and the \$250,000

The county’s posture is confident. Its 66-page responsive pleading calls the adoption “a model of good government in action” and argues the plaintiffs “generally lack standing as they have failed to allege particularized harm”; a demurrer seeks dismissal outright.[17][5][39] At the February 3, 2026 board meeting, the county allocated \$250,000 for outside counsel, Gentry Locke of Roanoke (attorney Michael Finney), atop up to \$100,000 in VACo liability coverage. County Attorney Tara McGee’s explanation to the board doubles as a datum on small-county capacity: “We don’t have the staffing in our office... to handle all elements of defensive litigation.”[5] Winfree used the occasion to renew his vote: “I’ve never been convinced any more than I am today that we made the right decision in this case.”[5] The appropriation equals about a quarter of one percent of the general fund. Plaintiff fundraising runs the other way: legal fees paid, per coverage, by donations from

roughly 300 residents. Haas: “We’ve got a David and Goliath situation going on... Little David here is doing everything based on donations.”[37][17]

The May 26 Ruling

On Tuesday, May 26, 2026, Judge Timothy K. Sanner heard pretrial motions on what the record in the case would be. (Coverage published May 27 describes the hearing as “Tuesday”; the kickoff convention of dating the ruling May 27 follows the publication date, and this study uses the hearing date.) The county had moved to admit its full legislative record, roughly 8,500 pages, on the theory that a challenge to a legislative act puts the whole record in play and that the county could not know which documents mattered before seeing the plaintiffs’ demurrer opposition. Strother argued the county had failed to identify which documents were essential and should “not be given the opportunity to dump” the volume on the court, citing as an example a Virginia Mercury article dated weeks after the adoption vote that the county had included. Sanner agreed the wholesale filing was excessive, denied admission, and directed a pared-down set germane to the case, with the county free to return after reviewing the plaintiffs’ theory.[38][40]

The discipline this study applies elsewhere applies here doubly: the ruling is about the record, not the merits. It establishes no defect in the adoption and voids nothing. What it does establish is tempo. Per the county’s own litigation update, the modified record is due at the end of June, the plaintiffs’ response to the county’s challenges is due July 21, additional county records follow in late August, and the demurrer will be argued October 20, 2026.[21][38] The ordinance will have operated unreviewed for at least eleven and a half months from adoption to the first merits-adjacent hearing. Haas called the ruling pleasing; both sides told reporters they would not back down.[38]

PART SIX: WHAT THE OVERLAY WAS BUILT TO RECEIVE

Tuckahoe Technology Park

The district's first application arrived June 10, 2026, two days before this snapshot. Tract, the Denver land developer whose Mountain Road campus Hanover rejected on May 27 and whose 744-acre Chesterfield proposal died at the commission stage in 2025, filed an initial conditional use permit application for "Tuckahoe Technology Park": nearly 900 acres across thirteen parcels owned by members of the Haddock, Stern, and Arenstein families, under contract to Tract, in TOD West, bordered by Hockett Road, Patterson Avenue, Route 288, and the Mosaic at West Creek neighborhood.[42] Concept plans show seven development areas and twelve data center buildings, most at 60 feet with one area at 80, with 500-foot setbacks where the ordinance requires them. Tract projects \$3 billion in construction over 20 years, \$400 million in real property tax and more than \$600 million in personal property tax over the same horizon, and 350 permanent jobs. Water and sewer would extend from the Tuckahoe Creek Service District along Hockett Road. No megawatt figure appears in the application coverage.[42]

The filing closes the loop Part Four left open: the rumored 2025 contract described eight buildings and two million square feet on the same land whose inclusion in the district Lyle tried and failed to strip on adoption night. Because the site is TOD West, the application takes the conditional path: a community meeting, a planning commission hearing, a board hearing, the discretionary process the rest of the district no longer requires. The first project under the overlay will therefore be decided the old way, which is an irony the institutional behavior framework should not let pass: the cleanest test of the by-right machinery is postponed precisely because the most controversial land was carved into the conditional sub-area. No hearing dates were public as of this snapshot.

Tract was rejected in Hanover on May 27 and filed in Goochland on June 10, fourteen days later. The companion Hanover study closes by asking where a post-rejection developer goes; this is the answer, observed in under three weeks, and it is the energy geography framework's diffusion hypothesis compressed to a single firm's quarter: pressure does not dissipate when refused, it relocates to the nearest jurisdiction whose framework is already open.

The SMR Thread, Run to Ground

The September 2025 broadcast coverage of residents alarmed by "a proposed data center and nuclear reactor development" requires careful unwinding, because the alarm was real and the proposal was not.[43] What happened: the draft ordinance was amended during the summer to add three use definitions, small modular nuclear

reactor facility, natural gas peaking plant, and utility generating station, to serve projected data center power demand. There is no SMR proposal, proponent, applicant, or site attached to any Goochland campus. The county's FAQ states the district "does not authorize or approve the construction or installation of a small modular reactor," and any actual reactor would face NRC and DEQ review on top of the CUP the ordinance requires.[35] The county administrator's only siting comment was hypothetical, pointing north of I-64 toward the landfill and quarry.*[44] Dominion's actual SMR activity sits at North Anna in Louisa County, with an Amazon partnership targeting nuclear capacity there; no Dominion filing or statement connects any reactor to Goochland.[45] The companion Hanover study reports the Dominion IRP's roughly 1.3 GW of SMR capacity through the late 2030s; that figure is a system-wide planning number, not a Goochland commitment.[23]

What Goochland actually did was zone for a reactor before anyone asked for one, which is the overlay's logic carried to its limit: pre-entitlement extended from the demand side of the data center economy to the supply side. The series has tabled co-located generation as a coming issue since the Google-CFS report; Goochland is the first jurisdiction in the portfolio to write it into land-use law, and the first whose residents organized against a power plant that exists only as a definition. "Chernobyl on the James" was rhetoric. The use category that provoked it is real, adopted, and waiting.

The Corridor's Other Transactions

The land record around the district shows steady institutional movement without a speculative wave. The dominant land-control event is Tract's purchase contract itself, unrecorded and unpriced in public sources. Recorded transactions bracket it: HCA sold its long-closed West Creek emergency center on about 57 acres for \$11 million in late September 2025 to an entity tied to Richmond developer Rob Chesson; Summit Real Estate Group and Loci Capital bought 23 acres in West Creek from Brandywine Realty Trust for \$4.6 million in October 2025 and broke ground in January 2026 on a 221,000-square-foot speculative industrial building; Eli Lilly's \$5 billion facility, announced September 16, 2025, anchors the corridor's non-data-center future.[46][47][8] A December 2024 rezoning involving the TOD West families' land, approved over neighbors' objections that it landlocked them, now reads as pre-assembly.*[48] BizSense's DeedBook transfer lists sit behind a paywall, and a fuller transaction sweep is a Part Thirteen item.

PART SEVEN: THE FISCAL ARCHITECTURE

The Rate Nobody Repriced

Goochland taxes data center equipment at \$0.44 per \$100 of assessed value, against \$3.75 for general business personal property: an 88 percent discount, re-adopted without controversy in the county's CY2026 rate resolution on April 14, 2026.[49] [50] The county's economic development arm markets an effective rate of \$0.24 after depreciation schedules.[51] The classification dates to April 2019, when the rate was set at \$0.40; the move to \$0.44 is undated in available sources.[11]

The regional table makes the posture legible. Rates per \$100 of assessed value on data center equipment, as of this snapshot:

Locality	Rate	Direction
Fairfax	\$4.57 (general BTPP)	Stable
Prince William	\$4.50	Raised (from \$4.15, FY2027)
Loudoun	\$4.15 (general PP)	Stable
New Kent	\$3.75 (general TPP; no DC class)	No class
Caroline	\$3.50 (BPP/M&T; technology zone rebates apply)	No separate class
Henrico	\$2.60	Raised (from \$0.40, 2025)
Louisa	\$2.07 (general PP, FY2027; no DC class)	Cut, credited to DC growth
Orange	\$1.25	Stable
Spotsylvania	\$1.25	SUP reform pending
Hanover	\$0.45 adopted; removed from FY2027 budget; reinstatement vote June 24, 2026, advertised up to \$3.00	Repricing
Goochland	\$0.44 (\$0.24 marketed effective)	Stable
Chesterfield	\$0.24 effective (30-year locks in 2025 agreements)	Contracted

Sources: county rate schedules and budget coverage; see endnote for the full citation set. Henrico's official revenue page still displays the superseded \$0.40 rate and conflicts with current reporting; the Hanover vote is twelve days after this snapshot and its outcome is unknowable here.[52][53]

A coordination note for the series: the kickoff brief for this study referenced Hanover's rate vote as a June 24 event needing date resolution against the Prince William window. The resolution is that the vote is June 24, 2026, pending; Hanover's existing \$0.45 rate dates to 2023, and the companion Hanover study's treatment is consistent with this table.[23][53]

The table's shape is the finding. Every jurisdiction above Goochland that recruited with a low rate has repriced or is repricing after seeing the industry up close. Henrico multiplied its rate six and a half times. Prince William raised twice in two years. Hanover stripped its rate from the budget rather than let it stand. Goochland, holding the region's second-cheapest rate, re-adopted it unchanged five months after pre-zoning 4,400 acres, and its adopted FY2027 budget books essentially no revenue from the district: the personal property and business equipment line is flat at \$21.4 million.[54] The utility finance framework gets a clean statement of the pricing-before-buildout problem the Hanover study poses, answered the opposite way. Hanover is using the pre-construction window to raise its price. Goochland set its price in 2019, built the entitlement around it in 2025, and has not revisited it. If Tract's \$600 million twenty-year personal property projection is roughly right, it is right at \$0.44; each penny of rate the county forgoes before equipment arrives is a penny contractually harder to recover after, as Chesterfield's 30-year locks demonstrate in the companion study.

The Expenditure Side of the Ledger

The county's own ledger around the district, FY2026 to date: \$250,000 appropriated to defend the adoption lawsuit (February 3, 2026); a separate \$250,000 earmarked in April 2026 to oppose the Valley Link 765kV-class transmission project crossing the county, which is unrelated to the TOD and should not be conflated with the defense money; and the staff cost, uncounted in any line item, of producing an 8,500-page legislative record, a months-long FOIA stream, and a litigation calendar running into 2027.[5][55] Half a million dollars in legal appropriations against zero collected data center revenue is the current arithmetic of the bet.

PART EIGHT: WATER AND POWER

Water

The district's water architecture is contractual and cross-boundary. The Tuckahoe Creek Service District buys from Henrico: 5.25 MGD under current contract, 25 MGD at ultimate contractual capacity, with wastewater agreements to Henrico and Richmond and some 462,000 gallons per day of legacy private reservations inside the district, Capital One's 150,000 GPD the largest.[9] The TOD makes public water and sewer mandatory for data centers and the FAQ assigns connection and upgrade costs to developers.[21][56] Tract's application proposes extending TCSD lines along Hockett Road.[42] The FY2027 capital budget carries a \$16.95 million bond-funded booster pump station in the eastern county; no county document ties it to the district explicitly, and the linkage is a verification item.[54]

No published analysis models district buildout demand against the Henrico contract's headroom. The comparison the record invites: Hanover's board rejected a single 900 MW campus partly because peak-day demand of 2 MGD strained a 24.7 MGD system it owned outright. Goochland has pre-entitled a district several times that campus's scale on water it buys from the neighbor whose residents opposed the district at the podium. The dependency cuts both ways and neither county has published what it means. For the infrastructure framework, the unanswered question is the same one Hanover's majority asked and Goochland's majority did not: what does peak day look like at buildout, and who bears it.

Power

Dominion moved before the first application did. In November 2025, the month of adoption, Dominion announced the West Creek project: a new substation and a new double-circuit 230kV transmission line "to ease the load on the local distribution network serving Goochland and Henrico counties and to support recently announced development projects." The community meeting came December 4, 2025; the SCC application was filed January 28, 2026, as Case No. PUR-2026-00009; public comment closed June 9; hearings are set for June 16, four days after this snapshot. [57] No filing names the TOD or any specific customer, and the "recently announced development projects" formulation covers Eli Lilly as well as any data center demand; the case file is a Part Thirteen target. The SCC approved a comparable Dominion line for Chesterfield data center load in February 2026, so the regional pattern of transmission following entitlement is established.[58]

Above the distribution layer, the county is fighting the same buildout it is courting. Goochland passed a resolution opposing Valley Link's \$1 billion, 115-mile transmission line across the county in April 2026 and put \$250,000 behind the

opposition.[55] The juxtaposition is the energy geography framework's to savor: a county pre-zoned for gigawatt-class load, resisting the interregional wires that gigawatt-class load summons, while funding both positions from the same general fund.

PART NINE: THE OPPOSITION ACROSS THE LINE

Who Organized

The opposition's institutional form is the Goochland Residents Alliance, which hosted the final pre-vote town hall on November 3, 2025 at Discovery United Methodist Church, drawing residents from Goochland, Henrico, and Hanover, with the Sierra Club Virginia chapter's communications director, Tim Cywinski, presenting on noise, diesel generators, and environmental impacts.[30] The neighborhood base was the corridor's HOAs: Readers Branch, whose 50-foot exposure under the original draft started the August backlash, and Mosaic at West Creek, whose designated speaker delivered the "sacrifice zone" line.[22][24] Stephen Levet ran the FOIA campaign that put the 1,000-email opposition record into the public domain.[30][31] The litigation is the same constituency by other means: the four plaintiffs are corridor-area property owners, the donor base is reported at roughly 300 residents, and Gessner, the informal counsel, frames the stakes in movement terms: "We're in it to win it." [17][37] Of the statewide network, only the Sierra Club, a Data Center Reform Coalition member, appears in the Goochland record directly; the Piedmont Environmental Council's coalition lists no Goochland member group as of this snapshot, and the Alliance's relationship to the coalition is a fieldwork question.[59]

The Cross-Boundary Pattern, Named

Goochland is the third case in this series in which the decisive opposition crossed a county line, and the pattern now deserves its own statement. In Hanover, the Wyndham community on the Henrico side organized against Hunting Hawk, the same constituency whose resistance had driven Henrico's reforms. In Orange, the opposition drew on Spotsylvania-adjacent networks seasoned by that county's fights. In Goochland, Henrico residents and two sitting Henrico supervisors opposed an ordinance they had no vote on, in a county whose water their county supplies. The pattern: data center burdens propagate along corridors and watersheds, but representation stops at the county line, so the people most practiced in opposing a land use are persistently the people with no franchise over the next decision about it. Roundtree and Rogish could speak at Goochland's podium; their constituents could not vote at Goochland's election. The distributional justice framework should treat this as a structural feature of Virginia's county-by-county land use regime, not an accident of this case: the overlay's benefits are jurisdictionally captured, the externalities are not, and the mismatch widens with every cross-boundary instrument the template's diffusion produces.

The Henrico side of the line also supplies the counterfactual the opposition kept pointing at. Henrico spent June 2025 adopting the inverse instrument: provisional use permits for new stand-alone data centers countywide, 500-foot residential setbacks, and a White Oak overlay concentrating the industry in Varina, reform adopted after its entitlements were granted, as the companion Henrico study documents at length.[60] Roundtree’s “gift” framing at the November 6 hearing was an argument from regret: Goochland still possessed the discretion Henrico had to claw back, and the overlay would spend it.

PART TEN: THE REPLICATION — NEW KENT AND THE DIFFUSION OF INSTRUMENTS

New Kent County, two counties east, began drafting its own technology overlay district while Goochland's was three months old and in litigation. The chronology: the board commissioned a Dewberry site-suitability study in April 2025; staff visited Louisa and Culpeper in January 2026; the director of community development presented a draft to the planning commission on February 17, 2026, and to the board a week later; BizSense's headline writer supplied the lineage explicitly, "Following Goochland's lead." [61][62] The draft covers roughly 1,800 gross acres along the Route 33 corridor at Eltham Road, 1.3 percent of county land, most of it owned by an entity tied to Jonathan Kinney. [61]

The design choices read as a markup of Goochland's experience. No SMR or peaker-plant category at all; energy generation requires a full conditional use permit. Lower height cap (85 feet including rooftop equipment), 200-foot setbacks from residential and agricultural, noise at 65/60 dBA, generator testing 9 to 5 weekdays, mandatory water-use analysis with each submittal. And on the decisive question of discretion, a hybrid: data centers would proceed by "administrative conditional use permit," no public hearing per project, Goochland's by-right machinery wearing a CUP label. Commissioner Patricia Townsend caught the substance at the February presentation, asking the staff director to confirm that once adopted, developers "would never come back to the planning commission." The answer was yes. [63]

Staff framing leaned protective: "a proactive approach to set standards... we're not doing it to cater to them, we're doing it to protect ourselves." [61] The February timeline contemplated community meetings from March, a commission hearing in May or June, and a board vote in June or July. As of this snapshot the county's planning page still labels the instrument a draft and no hearing is scheduled; the schedule has slipped, and whether the Goochland litigation caused the slip is unestablished in any source. The circumstantial reading is available either way, and Part Thirteen flags it for the fieldwork interviews rather than resolving it here. [62]

The lineage is now three iterations long and the mutation pattern is legible. Louisa invented the form and learned its costs: by-right entitlement produced an anchor tenant, then a backlash, then a retrofitted CUP and a rollback fight that continues. Goochland copied the by-right core, added money (the Technology Zone) and generation (the SMR category), compressed adoption into four months, and bought a process lawsuit. New Kent copied the pre-zoning strategy while deleting every feature that made Goochland's version combustible: no nuclear, lower noise, slower process, hearing-free approval renamed rather than removed. Each county metabolized its predecessor's controversy as design input. That is diffusion with

learning, and the energy geography framework should treat the ordinance lineage the way it treats project lineages: the instrument is the organism and litigation is the selection pressure. What no iteration has yet faced is the test Goochland's lawsuit poses to the genus: whether the form's defining move, wholesale pre-entitlement, can survive the procedural scrutiny that project-by-project decisions rarely attract at this intensity.

PART ELEVEN: REGIONAL CONTEXT — THE FIFTH POSITION

The series' institutional spectrum, as of this snapshot. Henrico reformed after entitling: by-right growth to eight million grandfathered square feet, then PUPs, setbacks, and a sixfold rate increase that the already-entitled pipeline largely escapes. Hanover refused case by case: one campus approved, two refused, leverage husbanded, the price of entry now being reset upward before any facility operates. Chesterfield contracted its leverage away: conditional use requirements on paper, 30-year rate locks in practice. Prince William's governance was captured and corrected: the revolving door, the Digital Gateway voiding, the \$4.50 rate, the standardized proffer architecture built from the wreckage. Goochland pre-entitled by ordinance: the decision every other county retained, project by project, Goochland made once, wholesale, in advance, and the citizens' counter-instrument was not a board campaign but a courtroom.[23][60]

Two features distinguish the fifth position. First, the locus of the citizens' check moved. In Henrico and Hanover, opposition worked through the land-use process itself: hearings, elections, applications denied or withdrawn. In Goochland the land-use process was completed in a single night, so opposition moved to the only forum left, and the operative question changed from "should this be approved" to "was this lawfully adopted." Process litigation is slower, more technical, and harder to mobilize around than a rezoning fight, and it runs on a docket clock while the entitlement runs on an administrative one. The Tuckahoe Technology Park application will complete its community meeting and possibly its hearings while the demurrer is still pending. If the plaintiffs ultimately prevail, the county will face the question Prince William faced after the Digital Gateway voiding: what happens to approvals issued under an ordinance later held void. If the county prevails, the template is validated at its most aggressive setting and New Kent's caution becomes optional. Either outcome instructs the next county more than anything in the ordinance text.

Second, the diffusion now runs through instruments rather than projects. The Hanover study closed by predicting development pressure would relocate toward "Louisa, Charles City, New Kent, Goochland, and the next ring of counties where the framework is still permissive and the opposition is not yet organized." Half of that sentence has aged well: Tract's fourteen-day pivot from Hanover rejection to Goochland filing is pressure relocating in real time. The other half this study corrects: by the Hanover study's own June 12, 2026 snapshot date, Goochland's framework was seven months past permissive-by-default (it was permissive by adopted design), and its opposition had been organized for nearly a year, with four

plaintiffs, a donor base, and a hearing date. The frontier turns out to be territory whose organization arrives simultaneously with the instrument, both of them imported, both of them improving with each iteration.

PART TWELVE: READINGS BY RESEARCH SPECIALTY

The Institutional Behavior Reading

Goochland offers the portfolio's cleanest natural experiment on the question of whether pre-entitlement by ordinance outruns democratic and judicial checks. The chronology is the evidence: adoption November 6, 2025; suit December 4; first application June 10, 2026; first merits-adjacent hearing October 20, 2026; no project hearing date yet set but the administrative machinery unimpeded throughout. The richest artifacts are the night-of amendments (each one resident-protective, each one post-notice, the tightening and the alleged defect being the same act); the tandem-hearing deferral that gave both ordinances a single midnight vote; the died-without-a-second pattern around Lyle's motions, which isolates where deferral failed; and the county's litigation-confidence posture ("a model of good government in action") set against its capacity admission ("we don't have the staffing"). The 122-day adoption arc against Louisa's three-year retrofit cycle measures how much faster the second iteration of an instrument moves than the first.

The Distributional Justice Reading

The corridor's burden-bearers are identifiable: Readers Branch (300+ homes, 50 feet from entitled land under the pre-TOD rules), Mosaic at West Creek (a 55+ community now bordering a 900-acre application), and the Hockett Road edge. The benefit side is the county general fund and the Technology Zone's qualifying firms. The structural finding is the franchise mismatch of Part Nine: the opposition was partly extraterritorial, Henrico residents and officials with no vote over the board that decided, and the watershed and viewshed do not respect the line that the ballot does. Unlike Henrico's Varina record, no racial siting pattern is visible in the available demographics, and unlike Hanover's Tract 3202, no income disparity has been established for the corridor; the tract-level analysis has not been done and is assigned to fieldwork rather than asserted. What is already established is procedural: the residents nearest the district produced 1,000-plus opposition emails, 80-plus speakers, and zero supporting speakers, and the instrument passed 4-1. Whatever the corridor's demographics turn out to be, the decision-to-consent ratio is already a finding.

The Utility Finance Reading

Three mechanisms. First, the unrepriced rate: \$0.44 set in 2019, re-adopted unchanged in April 2026, second-cheapest in the region, while every comparable jurisdiction reprices upward; the Tract application's \$600 million personal property projection capitalizes that rate for twenty years. Second, the incentive stack: TZ fee reimbursements up to 100 percent on top of the equipment discount on top of the

state sales tax exemption documented in the companion statewide report, a triple subsidy with no published fiscal model behind the county's \$600 million revenue marketing figure.* Third, the expenditure side: \$500,000 in legal appropriations (defense plus Valley Link opposition) against zero collected data center revenue, the litigation cost of pre-entitlement being a category the instrument's fiscal advocates never priced. The Dominion West Creek SCC file (PUR-2026-00009) and the GS-5 rate class treated in the companion Hanover study connect the county ledger to the ratepayer one.

The Energy, Labor, and Infrastructure Reading

The infrastructure record is thinner than Hanover's because no project has been decided, which is itself the point: the entitlement preceded the engineering. No published analysis models district buildout against the 5.25/25 MGD Henrico water contract; no MW figure exists for the first application; the transmission response (a 230kV line and substation) was announced the month of adoption, before any load was filed. The labor evidence at this stage is projection-only: Tract's 350 permanent jobs on 900 acres, against the Eli Lilly comparator next door (650 permanent jobs on 227 acres) and the JLARC finding of 25 to 50 permanent jobs per data center building. The construction-versus-permanent employment structure documented in the Hanover Tyson comparison will become testable here when hearings produce project-level commitments.

The Energy Geography Reading

Two diffusion processes, now distinguishable. Projects relocate: Tract, refused in Chesterfield and Hanover, filed in Goochland within a fortnight of the Hanover vote. Instruments replicate: Louisa to Goochland to New Kent, each iteration faster to draft and more defensive in design, the ordinance text itself the diffusing object. The SMR category is the frontier observation: co-located generation entering land-use law ahead of any generation proposal, the energy system's supply side beginning to pre-position in zoning code the way its demand side did a decade ago in Loudoun. The Valley Link fight adds the interregional layer: the county simultaneously courts terminal load and resists through-wires, a posture only coherent at the county scale and incoherent at the grid scale, which is precisely the scale mismatch the framework studies.

PART THIRTEEN: GAPS IN THE RECORD AND DIRECTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This case study is built on publicly available sources. The litigation will move during and after publication; the evidence snapshot date controls, and late developments should be dated precisely and flagged as pending in any revision. Items marked with an asterisk (*) in the body rest on secondary sources. This section doubles as the FOIA and fieldwork agenda for October 2026, a window that contains the demurrer hearing itself.

Decisions Pending at Snapshot

The October 20, 2026 demurrer hearing. The case's first merits-adjacent event, inside the fieldwork window. Attend if possible. Primary sources: the hearing, the order that follows, the clerk's file.

The record sequence. Modified legislative record due end of June 2026; plaintiffs' response July 21; additional county records late August. Each filing is a primary-source acquisition target as it lands.

The Tuckahoe Technology Park process. Community meeting and hearing dates unset at snapshot. The first test of the TOD's conditional path, and the first occasion for project-level water, power, and employment numbers.

The Hanover June 24 rate vote and the New Kent hearing schedule. Both reset tables in this study (Parts Seven and Ten) when they land.

The Dominion West Creek case (PUR-2026-00009). Hearings June 16, 2026. The evidentiary record may identify the load the line anticipates.

Primary-Source Verification Priorities

*The complaint and all pleadings. The county posts the complaint as a non-searchable scan; the nine-count structure, the statutory citations pleaded, and the specific advertised-versus-adopted changes alleged are reported here only through news coverage. Obtain the file from the Goochland Circuit Court clerk, including the case number, which no published source reports.

*The rejected 8,500-page record's index and the pared-down set. The index alone would map the county's own theory of its adoption record; the difference between the two filings will show what the county itself treats as essential.

*The ordinance adoption file: the published advertisements themselves (the heart of the Glazebrook question), staff reports, and redlines between the October 20 posted

version and the adopted version. The county's own news flashes describe the night-of amendments; the redline would establish them character by character.

*The hearing recordings. The November 6 meeting (available on the county's YouTube channel) is prime ethnographic material: six hours, 80-plus speakers, the night-of amendments presented live, each supervisor's full reasoning including Christy's, which print coverage never captured. The September 18 and 25 commission sessions likewise.

*The two town hall dates and records, confirmed by the county but undated in any posting.

*TZ incentive agreements, if any yet exist, and any performance agreements under Section 8-104(3).

*Corridor land records: the Tract contract terms if recorded at closing, the DeedBook series behind BizSense's paywall, and the December 2024 rezoning file for the TOD West parcels.

*The Glazebrook holding's exact language, quoted here from secondary summaries; pull 266 Va. 550 directly.

*The Lyle email and the FOIA production around it, reported by an advocacy site; obtain the documents themselves.

*The \$250,000 appropriation vote tally, unreported in coverage; board minutes, February 3, 2026.

*The \$600 million county revenue projection's underlying model, surfaced in broadcast coverage; FOIA the economic development analysis behind it.

*Henrico's current data center rate as applied: the official revenue page still shows \$0.40 against reporting of \$2.60; resolve against the adopted Henrico FY2026 ordinance before reusing the regional table.

Data Gaps Requiring FOIA or Direct Inquiry

Corridor demographics. No tract-level income or race analysis of the TOD-adjacent population has been done; ACS tables for the Centerville/West Creek tracts would put the distributional reading on the same footing as Henrico's and Hanover's.

The water arithmetic. District buildout demand against the Henrico contract: no document models it. The 16.95 million dollar booster pump station's relationship to the TOD. TCSD reserved-capacity accounting.

Institutional capacity baseline. Total county FTEs, planning department staffing, and the administrative load of CMP/POD review at buildout; McGee’s staffing admission suggests the comparison to Orange’s thin-staff record will be direct.

The Alliance and the coalition. Whether the Goochland Residents Alliance has formal ties to the Data Center Reform Coalition; its membership, funding, and relationship to the plaintiffs.

New Kent’s slip. Whether the Goochland litigation delayed the copycat district; interviews with New Kent planning staff and commissioners.

The end users. Tract’s model leaves operators unidentified at entitlement, in Goochland as in Hanover. Who would operate the twelve buildings is unknown in the public record.

Regional-Context Updates This Report Owes the Series (Flagged, Not Made)

The following corrections and updates to companion studies are flagged here for their next versions; no companion file has been edited in this build. Henrico v3.6: no changes required by this study’s findings; its regional sections do not treat Goochland. Hanover v2.0: endnote 30’s Louisa TOD citation (§ 86-455) should read §§ 86-330 through 86-334; Part Nine’s characterization of Goochland as a county “where the framework is still permissive and the opposition is not yet organized” should be revised to reflect the adopted TOD, the organized opposition, and the pending litigation, all predating that study’s snapshot date; Part Eight’s Tract options analysis (“reapplication, a Chesterfield-style exit, or concentration on the campus it already holds”) now has its answer and should cite the June 10, 2026 Goochland filing. The in-flight Chesterfield, Orange, and Prince William builds should table Goochland’s \$0.44 rate in their regional rate discussions, cite this study for the Louisa-Goochland-New Kent lineage rather than re-deriving it, and, in Prince William’s case, note that the Digital Gateway advertising precedent is now the live template for an active suit two rings east.

APPENDIX: TIMELINE OF TURNING POINTS, 2019-2026

Date	Event
Apr. 2019	County creates \$0.40 data center equipment rate (now \$0.44), 88% below general BTPP
Apr. 3, 2023	Louisa adopts Virginia's first Technology Overlay District (Ord. 2023-6, 6-1)
Jan. 2024	Board special meeting sets tax-base diversification priority; 70/30 revenue goal
Aug. 5, 2024	Louisa retrofits CUP requirement onto TOD uses (Ord. 2024-11)
Dec. 2024	Board approves West Creek-area rezoning of TOD West families' parcels over neighbors' objections
Jul. 7, 2025	Goochland TOD/TZ introduced at first community meeting
Aug. 2025	Planning commission hearing postponed "after hearing public outcry"; Readers Branch 50-foot exposure reported
Sep. 8, 2025	Second community meeting; ~700 attend; data-center-and-nuclear alarm peaks
Sep. 16, 2025	Eli Lilly announces \$5B West Creek facility
Sep. 18 / 25, 2025	Planning commission hearings; continued 4-1, then 3-2 recommendation with four conditions
Oct. 7, 2025	TZ hearing deferred to be heard in tandem with TOD
Oct. 20-21, 2025	Revised ordinances posted; the last published version before adoption
Nov. 3, 2025	Goochland Residents Alliance town hall; Sierra Club presents; three counties' residents attend
Nov. 6, 2025	Board adopts TOD and TZ 4-1 just after midnight; floor amendments adopted same night; ~350 attend, 80+ speak, none in favor
Nov. 2025	Dominion announces West Creek 230kV line and substation
Dec. 4, 2025	Haas, Knisley, Reed, and Minnick sue (day 28 of the 30-day window); Dominion community meeting same day
Jan. 28, 2026	Dominion files SCC Case No. PUR-2026-00009
Feb. 3, 2026	Board appropriates \$250,000 for outside counsel (Gentry Locke)
Feb. 17-24, 2026	New Kent staff presents draft copycat district to planning commission and board
Apr. 7, 2026	County resolves to oppose Valley Link; second \$250,000 follows

Apr. 14, 2026	CY2026 tax rates re-adopted; \$0.44 data center rate unchanged
May 5, 2026	FY2027 budget adopted, \$171M, no TOD revenue assumed
May 26, 2026	Sanner rejects 8,500-page record filing; pared-down set ordered
May 27, 2026	Hanover rejects Tract's Mountain Road campus 4-3
Jun. 10, 2026	Tract files Tuckahoe Technology Park CUP: ~900 acres, 12 buildings, TOD West
Jun. 12, 2026	Evidence snapshot
Jun. 16, 2026	SCC hearings, Dominion West Creek case (pending)
Jun. 24, 2026	Hanover equipment rate vote (pending)
Jul. 21, 2026	Plaintiffs' response due (pending)
Oct. 20, 2026	Demurrer hearing, Goochland Circuit Court (pending; inside fieldwork window)

ENDNOTES

[1] The Alfred P. Sloan Foundation study, “Energy Implications of Data Center Growth in Georgia, Virginia, and Tennessee,” is led by a three-member principal investigator team with two project consultants, whose combined expertise spans anthropology and institutional analysis, environmental and distributional justice, geography and sustainability, utility finance, and energy and labor studies. The project launches in October 2026. Researcher-level attributions are maintained separately in project files.

[2] Tommy N. Turner, What Virginia Is Spending, What Virginia Is Getting: A Fiscal Analysis of the Commonwealth’s Data Center Tax Exemptions, v4.0, March 2026.

[3] Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, Virginia Population Estimates, July 1, 2025 (official estimates file published February 24, 2026): Goochland County 28,432. 2020 Census: 24,727. The ~26,000 working figure used in earlier project materials is superseded; a 29,187 figure circulating in secondary summaries does not match the Cooper Center’s published file.

[4] Goochland County, FY2027 budget: proposed February 17, 2026 at \$170,997,815 all funds (including \$16,951,055 in proposed bond proceeds for the Ridgefield Booster Pump Station); adopted May 5, 2026 with no tax rate increases. County news releases, February 17 and May 5, 2026; County Administrator’s Proposed FY27 Budget presentation, goochlandva.us DocumentCenter.

[5] Virginia Business, “Goochland sued over technology overlay district,” February 10, 2026: lawsuit filed December 4, 2025 by Cynthia Haas, Peggy Knisley, Virginia H. Reed, and Gail A. Minnick against the county, Board of Supervisors, and Planning Commission; \$250,000 outside-counsel allocation at the February 3, 2026 board meeting; Gentry Locke (Roanoke) retained; VACo coverage up to \$100,000; County Attorney Tara McGee staffing quote; Winfree quote; complaint language on objective standards quoted therein.

[6] Goochland County, FY2026 budget adopted April 15, 2025: \$148.5 million total (+9.2%), County General Fund \$65.7 million, real estate rate \$0.53, thirteen new positions countywide. County news release.

[7] Richmond BizSense, “Goochland supervisors approve tech overlay district in 4-1 vote after marathon meeting,” November 10, 2025: 4-1 votes on both ordinances; ~350 attendees; 4+ hours of comment; no supporting speakers; Lyle deferral motion to July 2026 and TOD West removal motion, each dying without a second; Vaughters motion; staff amendments presented the night of the vote including the Sec. 15-

448.B(3) clarification; supervisor quotations; West Creek 1987 by-right zoning context; TOD West family ownership.

[8] Goochland County news release, September 16, 2025; Richmond BizSense, September 17, 2025: Eli Lilly \$5 billion pharmaceutical manufacturing facility on a 227-acre Markel-owned site at 12575 West Creek Parkway; 1,800 construction jobs, 650 permanent jobs.

[9] Goochland County, Tuckahoe Creek Service District FAQ pages: district created 2002; \$0.32 ad valorem surtax since 2012; water purchased from Henrico County, 5.25 MGD current and 25 MGD ultimate contractual capacity; wastewater agreements with Henrico and Richmond; ~462,000 GPD in legacy private capacity reservations, Capital One's 150,000 GPD largest.

[10] Goochland County news flash, "Board of Supervisors Approves Technology Overlay District and Technology Zone," November 7, 2025: adoption recap; outreach history from the January 2024 special meeting forward; Vaughters floor amendments converting the generator-mitigation menu into an all-of-the-above mandate with Tier 4 certified diesel; Spoonhower second.

[11] Goochland County news release, FY2020 budget (adopted April 2019): creation of the data center business personal property classification at \$0.40 per \$100 "to promote further investment in this market sector." The date of the subsequent move to \$0.44 is not pinned down in available sources.

[12] Louisa County Code §§ 86-330 through 86-334 (Technology Overlay District), Municode, codified through Ord. 2026-6 (March 16, 2026): purpose, establishment (125 contiguous acres minimum, 115kV proximity, 1%/3,266-acre cap), design standards (200-ft residential and 300-ft agricultural buffers, 65/60 dBA), and uses. The editor's note to § 86-333 records Ord. 2024-11 (August 5, 2024) retitling the section from "Permitted uses—Generally," marking the conversion of principal uses from by-right to conditional use permit. Section 86-455, cited for the Louisa TOD in earlier series work including the Hanover case study's endnote 30, is a corner-lot provision.

[13] The Central Virginian, "County OKs tech overlay districts," April 2023: Ordinance 2023-6 adopted April 3, 2023 by a 6-1 vote, Cuckoo District Supervisor Willie Gentry dissenting.

[14] Louisa County news release, August 2023: \$11 billion Amazon Web Services two-campus commitment within the Technology Overlay District, announced four months after the district's adoption.

[15] Engage Louisa (Tammy Purcell), 2024-2026 coverage: 2024 district shrinkage; January 2026 AWS purchase of ~1,925 acres including the Fisher Chewning tract for \$72.45 million; Supervisor Duane Adams's push to remove ~2,600 acres from the district; planning commission's 7-0 February 12, 2026 vote pulling the rollback hearing from its agenda. See also The Central Virginian, "County defers decision on tech overlay district removal." No final rollback decision as of June 12, 2026.

[16] Virginia Mercury, "Amazon pulls Louisa County data center proposal after strong resistance," July 28, 2025: AWS withdrawal of the third-campus CUP (up to 7.2M sq ft on the ~1,400-acre Fisher Chewning tract).

[17] Richmond BizSense, "As lawsuit hearing looms, Goochland residents keep up fight against controversial tech overlay district," May 20, 2026: district acreage (~4,400 total, ~3,500 in West Creek under Pruitt Associates control); complaint allegations ("wholly inadequate," "confusingly defective," adopted version "differed materially" from late-October notices); Haas quotations; county responsive-pleading characterizations; ~300-resident donor base.

[18] Goochland County, Board of Supervisors Approved TOD Ordinance, November 6, 2025 (CP-2025-00002; ZOA-2025-00001), goochlandva.us DocumentCenter: Article 27.A, Secs. 15-448 through 15-450; siting criteria (100 contiguous acres, 115kV proximity); use table (Sec. 15-450) including data centers by right except TOD West, and utility generating stations (natural gas peaking plants and small modular nuclear reactor facilities under 300 MWe) by CUP; development standards (Sec. 15-449): 300-ft/500-ft setbacks, 250-ft vegetated buffers, 55 dBA/65 dBC, generator testing and screening requirements, Tier 4 diesel, 120-ft height cap with 80-ft adjacency ceiling, mandatory public water and sewer; planning commission procedural recital (hearings September 18 and 25, 2025; 3-2 recommendation); Sec. 15-448.B(3); enabling authority citations including Va. Code § 15.2-2204.

[19] Goochland County, Ordinance No. 6453 (Technology Zone), adopted November 6, 2025, goochlandva.us DocumentCenter: Secs. 8-100 through 8-106 under Va. Code § 58.1-3850; up to 75% building permit fee and 100% utility connection fee reimbursement for up to ten years; qualification thresholds; clawback (Sec. 8-106); Tuckahoe Creek surtax preserved (Sec. 8-105); recital deferring the October 7, 2025 hearing to November 6 for tandem consideration; printed vote block recording the 4-1 vote, Christy seconding; boilerplate recital placing the meeting in the Goochland County Administration Building.

[20] Cardinal News, "Goochland County will help us gauge the public acceptance of the next generation of nuclear reactors," September 23, 2025: no other Virginia locality had a zoning ordinance written specifically to allow SMRs alongside data centers.

[21] Goochland County, “Technology Overlay District & Technology Zone” page, goochlandva.us/1408, including the litigation update of May 2026 (modified record due end of June 2026; plaintiffs’ response due July 21; additional county records late August; next hearing October 20, 2026), the outreach chronology (community meetings July 7 and September 8, 2025; two town halls; HOA meetings), and the county’s pre-TOD/post-TOD setback framing quoted in Part Three.

[22] Richmond BizSense, “Goochland delays planning commission hearing on proposed tech overlay district,” August 7, 2025: County Administrator Jeremy Raley’s postponement of the August 21 hearing “after hearing public outcry”; Readers Branch (300+ homes); the original draft’s allowance of a data center under 80 feet within 50 feet of the subdivision.

[23] Tommy N. Turner, Case Study: Hanover County — Mountain Road, Tract, and the Search for Leverage, v2.0, June 2026 (companion study in this series): the Mountain Road proffer record and 4-3 rejection of May 27, 2026; Hanover’s \$0.45 rate (2023) and June 24, 2026 reinstatement vote at up to \$3.00; the Dominion 2024 IRP figures including approximately 1.3 GW of small modular nuclear capacity through the late 2030s; the GS-5 rate class; the regional diffusion passage corrected in Part Eleven of this study.

[24] Richmond BizSense, “Goochland residents come out against proposed tech overlay district at commission meeting,” September 19, 2025: ~700 attendees at the September 8 community meeting; several hundred at the September 18 hearing; the 4-1 continuance; Mosaic at West Creek HOA “sacrifice zone” statement; “Chernobyl on the James”; West Creek tenant context.

[25] Richmond BizSense, “Proposed Goochland tech overlay district moves forward after planning commission thumbs-up,” September 26, 2025: September 25 vote 3-2 (McLaughlin, Cosby, Pituck for; Kowalski, Kemmerly against); Kemmerly’s motion attaching four recommended conditions; West Creek acreage and tenants.

[26] WRIC ABC 8, “Controversial high-tech development proposal narrowly advances in Goochland” (September 2025). WRIC pages block automated retrieval; the 3-2 vote and dates are confirmed by the adopted TOD ordinance’s recitals and the county TOD/TZ page.

[27] Goochland County news flash, October 21, 2025: revised ordinances and maps posted October 20 for public review ahead of the November 6 hearing, incorporating planning commission recommendations (no by-right energy generation; CUP for TOD West data centers; 55 dBA/65 dBC; 500-ft agricultural setback; 80-ft adjacency cap; mandatory public water; no residential street access); hearing noticed for Thursday, November 6, 2025, 6:30 p.m., Goochland High School auditorium; the

October generator-mitigation menu language compared against the adopted mandate.

[28] Virginia Mercury, “Goochland approves tech overlay district after hours of resident backlash,” November 10, 2025: corridor geography; six-hour meeting; more than 80 residents of Goochland and surrounding counties speaking in opposition; “several changes were made to the original proposal”; characterization of Lyle’s motion as a one-year delay; Winfree and Spoonhower quotations; the “Tim Winfree” misnomer noted in Part Four.

[29] WTVR CBS 6, November 6-7, 2025 coverage: three hours of public comment within a six-plus-hour meeting; Spoonhower and Lyle day-after quotations.

[30] Richmond BizSense, “Ahead of today’s Goochland tech zone vote, residents continue to express concerns,” November 6, 2025: Goochland Residents Alliance town hall of November 3, 2025 at Discovery United Methodist Church; attendees from Goochland, Henrico, and Hanover; Sierra Club Virginia chapter communications director Tim Cywinski’s presentation; Stephen Levet FOIA campaign and the 1,000+ email record.

[31] VPM News, “Goochland County approves controversial technology overlay district” (slug: goochland-county-data-centers-tech-district-lyle-vaughters-levet), November 10, 2025: hearing past midnight at Goochland High School; Henrico supervisors Jody Rogish (Tuckahoe) and Misty Roundtree (Three Chopt) speaking against, with Roundtree’s “gift” quotation; Vaughters “cotton out of my ears” quotation; Lyle deferral quotation; Levet email figures; photo-caption mislabeling of Lyle as District 2 noted in Part Four.

[32] NBC12/WWBT, “Goochland County approves controversial data center overlay district,” November 7, 2025: more than 80 speakers; Winfree and Lyle quotations.

[33] Goochland County, Board of Supervisors roster, goochlandva.us/158: Christy (D1), Spoonhower (D2), Winfree (D3), Vaughters (D4), Lyle (D5); leadership news flashes (Winfree chair 2025; Christy chair 2026).

[34] Neighbors For Change, “Goochland grapples with accusations of undisclosed data center contract” (fall 2025): Supervisor Lyle’s email, surfaced via resident FOIA request, asserting a landowner-developer contract for an eight-building, ~2-million-sq-ft data center campus contingent on TOD inclusion. Advocacy-site sourcing; the underlying documents are a Part Thirteen acquisition target.

[35] Goochland County FAQ (TOD series), QID 522: county awareness of “discussions between a private developer and several landowners regarding a contract for a potential data center project on approximately 900+ acres near

Mosaic and Richmond Country Club along Hockett Road (TOD West)”; the statement that the district “does not authorize or approve the construction or installation of a small modular reactor”; NRC/DEQ review requirements; SMR siting limits; TOD West CUP process (community meeting plus commission and board hearings).

[36] Va. Code § 15.2-2204 (Advertisement of plans, ordinances, etc.), law.lis.virginia.gov: two published notices (first no more than 28 days, second no less than five days before the meeting); descriptive-summary requirement for notice by reference; parcel-identification and mailed-notice requirements for map changes (boundary description plus map link permitted above 100 parcels); the inadvertent-failure savings clause and the actual-notice/participation waiver provision; subsection E’s 30-day limitations period for advertisement-based challenges.

[37] WTVR CBS 6, “Goochland data center lawsuit” feature, April 9, 2026: Haas’s residence adjacent to TOD-permitted land; the demurrer pending; the “David and Goliath” and “\$350,000” quotations (the latter combining the \$250,000 appropriation with the \$100,000 VACo coverage and treated here as a plaintiff’s characterization).

[38] Richmond BizSense, “Judge rejects county’s full 8,500-page filing in Goochland TOD lawsuit,” May 27, 2026 (reporting the Tuesday, May 26 hearing): Judge Timothy K. Sanner’s denial of the county’s motion to admit the full legislative record; Strother’s “dump” argument and the post-adoption Virginia Mercury article example; Finney’s legislative-record argument; the pared-down set ordered, with the county free to return after reviewing the plaintiffs’ theory; the withdrawn Count VIII (arbitrary and capricious) with Strother and Raley quotations; the October 20, 2026 demurrer setting; plaintiff counsel and informal-adviser identifications.

[39] Goochland County DocumentCenter: “Technology Overlay District Lawsuit” (complaint, scanned image without machine-readable text) and “Defendants’ Responsive Pleading” (66 pages). The circuit court case number is unreported in any published source; obtaining the clerk’s file is a Part Thirteen priority.

[40] Goochland on my mind (civic blog), “TOD pretrial motions,” May 2026: nine-count structure; relief sought (declaration of nullity, public-hearing compliance, legal fees); hearing account consistent with BizSense; demurrer hearing October 20, 2026, 9:30 a.m.

[41] *Glazebrook v. Board of Supervisors of Spotsylvania County*, 266 Va. 550, 587 S.E.2d 589 (2003): published notice must allow a citizen to reasonably determine whether he or she is affected; notice by reference requires an accurate descriptive summary; a failed notice invalidates the proceedings that follow. Holding language

drawn from secondary summaries pending direct retrieval of the opinion (Part Thirteen).

[42] Richmond BizSense, “Tuckahoe Tech Park data center campus planned on 900-acre tract in Goochland,” June 11, 2026: Tract’s initial CUP application filed June 10, 2026; thirteen parcels, ~900 acres, Haddock/Stern/Arenstein ownership, under contract; seven development areas, twelve buildings, 60-80 ft heights, 500-ft setbacks; \$3 billion construction over 20 years; \$400M real property and \$600M+ personal property tax projections; 350 permanent jobs; TCSD service extended along Hockett Road; no megawatt figure disclosed.

[43] WTVR CBS 6, “Goochland County residents voice concerns over proposed data center and nuclear reactor development,” September 8, 2025; companion NBC12 coverage September 4-26, 2025: the summer amendment adding small modular nuclear reactor facility, natural gas peaking plant, and utility generating station definitions to the draft.

[44] Henrico Citizen, September 2025: county administrator’s hypothetical SMR siting comment (north of I-64, near the landfill and rock quarry); ~300 MWe ordinance cap. Paywalled; flagged secondary.

[45] Utility Dive and VPM News coverage, 2024-2025: Dominion Energy’s SMR development activity at North Anna (Louisa County), including the RFP for SMR designs and the Amazon nuclear partnership. No Dominion filing or statement connects an SMR to any Goochland site.

[46] Richmond BizSense, “HCA sells long-closed emergency center on 60 acres in Goochland for \$11M,” October 13, 2025: ~57 acres at 12720 Tuckahoe Creek Parkway; buyer entity tied to Rob Chesson; HCA paid \$10.5M for the land in 2006.

[47] Thalhimer announcement; GlobeNewswire, January 8, 2026; Richmond BizSense, January 22, 2026: Summit Real Estate Group/Loci Capital purchase of 23.18 acres in West Creek Business Park from Brandywine Realty Trust for \$4.6 million (October 2025); 221,231-sq-ft speculative West Creek Commerce Center, ground broken January 2026.

[48] Richmond BizSense, “Goochland board OKs West Creek parcel rezoning despite neighbors’ claims of landlocking,” December 5, 2024.

[49] Goochland County Commissioner of the Revenue, tax rate schedule, goochlandva.us/592: Real Estate \$0.53; TCSD ad valorem \$0.32; Personal Property and Business Personal Property \$3.75; Machinery & Tools \$1.00; Business Personal Property for Data Centers \$0.44. Discount arithmetic: $1 - (0.44 \div 3.75) = 88.3\%$.

[50] Goochland County, Resolution 6636 (CY2026 tax rates), adopted April 14, 2026: “\$0.44 per \$100 assessed valuation — Business Personal Property for Data Centers.” The resolution’s extracted text shows a strikethrough artifact on this line; the published rate schedule confirms \$0.44.

[51] Goochland County Department of Economic Development, goochlandforbusiness.com/170/Taxes: marketed effective rate of \$0.24 per \$100 for data center business personal property after depreciation and assessment schedules.

[52] Rate table sources: Loudoun FY2027 budget adoption news flash, April 7, 2026 (\$4.15 general PP); Fairfax County EDA tax facts, September 2025 (\$4.57 BTPP, accelerated computer-equipment depreciation to a 2% floor); Prince William FY2027 budget adoption, April 21, 2026 (\$4.50 data center computer equipment, from \$4.15); Henrico FY2025-26 budget coverage, Richmond BizSense February 26, 2025, and corrected BizSense reporting April 27, 2026 (\$2.60, from \$0.40); Louisa coverage, WRIC (\$2.43 general PP cut to \$2.07 for FY2027, no separate class); New Kent Commissioner of the Revenue 2026 schedule (\$3.75 TPP, no class); Orange County proposed FY2026 rate schedule (\$1.25); Spotsylvania official rate page (\$1.25, class effective January 1, 2020) and Fredericksburg Free Press, February 25, 2026 (SUP requirement and advertised-rate action, outcome unconfirmed); Caroline County business taxes page (\$3.50 BPP/M&T; countywide technology zone rebates); Chesterfield: GRP announcement (effective \$0.24, July 2019) and Richmond BizSense, June 27, 2025 (30-year rate locks in incentive agreements).

[53] Richmond BizSense, “Hanover supervisors to consider raising tax rate on data center equipment,” April 27, 2026 (corrected): Hanover’s \$0.45 rate created in 2023; removal from the FY2027 budget at the April 8, 2026 adoption; June 24, 2026 public hearing and vote on reinstatement at up to \$3.00; Henrico current-rate confirmation. Henrico’s official revenue division page still displays \$0.40 and conflicts with this reporting; flagged in Part Thirteen.

[54] Goochland County, County Administrator’s Proposed FY27 Budget presentation, February 17, 2026: General Fund \$107.8 million proposed (+3.7% over the FY2026 GF of \$103,940,253 on a transfers-inclusive basis; the FY2026 county-operations GF figure of \$65.7 million is definitionally narrower); Personal Property and Business Equipment revenue line essentially flat at \$21.448 million (FY2026: \$21.5 million); no data center revenue line; \$16,951,055 bond-funded Ridgefield Booster Pump Station.

[55] Richmond BizSense, “Goochland earmarks \$250K to oppose \$1B Valley Link transmission project,” April 20, 2026; Goochland County news release and Valley Link project page; Cardinal News, March 26, 2026: \$1 billion, 115-mile transmission

line (Joshua Falls to Yeat) crossing Goochland; county opposition resolution April 7, 2026; preferred route filing with the SCC expected around September 2026.

[56] Goochland County FAQ (TOD series), QID 519: developers bear water/sewer connection and upgrade costs.

[57] Dominion Energy, West Creek project page (dominionenergy.com/westcreek): new substation and double-circuit 230kV line “to ease the load on the local distribution network serving Goochland and Henrico counties and to support recently announced development projects”; announcement letter November 2025; community meeting December 4, 2025 (Residence Inn Short Pump); SCC application filed January 28, 2026, Case No. PUR-2026-00009; public comment deadline June 9, 2026; public witness and evidentiary hearings June 16, 2026.

[58] VPM News, February 9, 2026: SCC approval of a Dominion transmission line near Chesterfield’s Hallsley area serving data center load.

[59] Piedmont Environmental Council, Virginia Data Center Reform Coalition member list (pecva.org): Sierra Club Virginia Chapter listed; no Goochland member group listed as of June 12, 2026; Henrico Conservation Action Network the coalition’s only Richmond-area locality member.

[60] Henrico County, Data Center Guidelines Comprehensive Plan Amendment, adopted June 10, 2025 (henrico.gov); Richmond BizSense, May 15, 2025; VPM News, May 19, 2025: provisional use permits for new stand-alone data centers countywide, 500-ft residential setbacks, generator-testing limits, noise studies, and the White Oak Technology Park overlay concentrating data centers in Varina. Treated at length in the companion Henrico case study.

[61] Richmond BizSense, “Following Goochland’s lead, New Kent County mulling data center-centric tech overlay district,” February 19, 2026: ~1,800 gross/1,260 net acres on the Route 33 corridor at Eltham Road (1.3% of county land); majority ownership by a Jonathan Kinney-tied entity; Dewberry study (April 2025); staff visits to Louisa and Culpeper (January 2026); February 17 planning commission presentation and February 24 board work session; draft standards (administrative CUP, no SMR/peaker category, 200-ft setbacks, 85-ft height cap including rooftop equipment, 65/60 dBA, water use analysis); Airaghi quotations; contemplated timeline (community meetings from March; commission hearing May or June; board vote June or July).

[62] New Kent County news flash, February 20, 2026; staff TOD presentation (newkent-va.us/DocumentCenter); New Kent County Planning page, accessed June 12, 2026, still labeling the instrument “(Draft) Technology Overlay District” with no public hearing scheduled.

[63] New Kent-Charles City Chronicle, “Consideration for development of Technology Overlay District targets data center development,” March 8, 2026: Commissioner Patricia Townsend’s exchange with community development director Josh Airaghi on the no-further-hearings feature.

This case study draws on Goochland County ordinances and county records, Goochland County Circuit Court coverage, Virginia Code and case law, State Corporation Commission filings, census and budget data, and sustained local and regional news coverage from 2023 through June 2026. It is a companion to What Virginia Is Spending, What Virginia Is Getting: A Fiscal Analysis of the Commonwealth’s Data Center Tax Exemptions (v4.0, March 2026), which covers the statewide fiscal, ratepayer, and employment picture in detail.