

February 8, 2026

Meeting Address:

City of San José
200 East Santa Clara Street
San Jose, CA 95113

Meeting Date:

Council Chambers
Monday, February 9, 2026
01:30 PM

Transportation & Environment

Committee:

David Cohen, Chair
Pam Foley, Vice Chair
Peter Ortiz, Member
Pamela Campos, Member
Anthony Tordillos, Member

Committee Staff:

Manuel Pineda, City Manager's Office
Jon Calegari, City Attorney's Office
Faye Garcia, Mayor's Office
Yasmin Johnson, City Clerk's Office

Subject: Public Comment - Item 1: Large-Load Energy Customer Development Status Report

Chair Cohen and Members of the Transportation & Environment Committee,

As a lifelong San José resident, I am writing to demand clear accountability and public transparency from City Council, the Transportation & Environment Committee, and staff overseeing the Large-Load Energy Customer Development program and the hyperscale data center buildout it is enabling. Specifically, the T&E Committee and the Council at large have an obligation to its residents and should consider the following:

1. Conduct meaningful community engagement and hold a public Council Study Session on the *cumulative impacts* of all data center development in San José (existing, approved, and proposed) focused on public health, water, wastewater, energy reliability, and neighborhood conditions. Given the public health implications, the City should coordinate this work with Santa Clara County Public Health.
2. Create an independent Data Center Oversight Committee that includes local community leaders and relevant technical/public health expertise, tasked with reviewing the adequacy of environmental and health impact analyses for data center projects (including state-led CEQA documents) and reporting findings publicly to Council.
3. Commission a real-world operations validation study of currently operating data centers in San José that compares EIR/CEQA assumptions to actual conditions, including generator runtime and emissions, water use, noise, and heat impacts.

We must fully understand not only the public health impacts, but also the public infrastructure impacts this buildout will impose on our potable water supply, water/wastewater systems, and overall quality of life.

Traditional data centers are generally smaller facilities serving one organization. Hyperscale data centers are massive, standardized cloud and generative-AI campuses designed to operate at sustained high utilization, with power and cooling demands large enough to drive major, dedicated grid and water infrastructure planning.

The San José City Charter SECTION 608. Racial and Social Equity states the following:

The Mayor and City Council shall adopt and maintain a statement of values, as permitted by law, promoting racial and social equity, inclusion, and racial and social justice which shall provide guidance to City officers and employees in their conduct while discharging their public responsibilities, including development and implementation of decisions, policies, budgets, programs, and practices of the City of San José.

Diesel backup pollution, waste heat, are added strain disproportionately burden communities that already face higher pollution and have less political power. Under the City Charter, equity is not optional—it must guide City decisions and practices. The Charter makes equity a governing requirement, not a talking point. This buildout has direct public health and infrastructure consequences, and the City Council and staff cannot outsource equity to a state-led CEQA process. The City of San José still has an independent duty to align its actions with its City Charter.

Such duty and due diligence are necessary because the City of San José is undertaking what amounts to one of the largest infrastructure-enabled development buildouts in its history. We do not have to speculate about what this looks like in practice—real-world consequences are already visible in the record for the newly powered **Great Oaks South Backup Generating Facility** serving **Equinix data centers**. The Great Oaks record directly undermines the reassurance embedded in this report's Memorandum and Attachment. For example:

1. The Great Oaks South Facility will operate an installation of 36, 3.25 MW diesel-fired generators.¹ (a large onsite diesel plant intended to support data center operations).
2. The Great Oaks record also includes evidence from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) demonstrating that “backup” diesel operation is not limited to routine testing and maintenance in the real world: “Between September 1, 2019, and September 30, 2020 nearly half of the identified data centers in Santa Clara, San Jose, and Sunnyvale operated backup diesel generators for reasons other than routine testing and maintenance. Many of the data centers operated diesel generators during multiple nontesting / non-maintenance events; non-testing/ non-maintenance

¹ [TN239063 - Great Oaks South Backup Generating Facility Final Environmental Impact Report. Project Description 3-7. Page 63](#)

hours of operation approached 50 hours for one generator for one event; it appears 40 or more generators operated concurrently at two facilities; and one facility ran diesel generators for approximately 400 hours for non-testing/ non-maintenance purposes over the course of the period.²

3. On water sourcing, the Great Oaks record 3.5.2 Water Use: further states:
“SV1 met with Great Oaks Water Company who explained that they have no plans to join the SBWRP Program and as a condition of it serving the site with potable water, no recycled water could be delivered to the site. Therefore, recycled water is not feasible for the GOSDC (SV1 2020a).”
“GOWC will supply all potable water for the Project, as well as its present and future customers from groundwater resources.”³

These are not minor details. They go directly to the public health and infrastructure impacts residents are being asked to accept—diesel air pollution during non-routine events, and the continued reliance on constrained or vulnerable water sources.

In the context of climate disruption, the City’s own Climate Vulnerability Assessment recognizes the fragility and interdependence of our water system:

“Valley Water supplies potable water to a large portion of Santa Clara County, including San José. Most of Valley Water’s water comes from snowpack in the Sierra Nevada mountains through the Hetch-Hetchy water system. About 40% of Valley Water’s supply is imported from the State Water Project (SWP) and Central Valley Project (CVP), water conveyance systems in California that provide water for residential, agricultural, and industrial use. An additional 30% of Valley Water’s supply comes from local surface and ground water, 10% from the San Francisco Public Utility Commission’s (SFPUC) Regional Water System, and 5% is recycled.”

Given these realities, Council and City staff have an obligation to plan for the long-term interests of residents—not just near-term economic projections. A projected \$4–7 million annual benefit does not justify proceeding without a full cumulative impacts analysis and enforceable safeguards. If residents absorb preventable health harms and infrastructure failures because the City accepted incomplete disclosure and delegated accountability elsewhere, those costs will dwarf the claimed fiscal upside—and the public record will show that decision-makers were warned.

Respectfully submitted for the public record,
Ellina Yin, District 6 San José / Santa Clara County Resident

² [TN235803 - Bay Area Air Quality Management District Comments - Comment Letter for Great Oaks South Data Center NOP. Page 4](#)

³ [TN233005-4 - SV1 Responses to CEC Data Requests Set 2 GOSBGF - Part IV. Page 9](#)