

JONES COUNTY IOWA ORDINANCE 2025-02

An ordinance amending the code of ordinances of the County of Jones, State of Iowa.

Be it enacted by the Board of Supervisors of Jones County; Iowa as follows:

Section 1: The purpose of this ordinance is to amend CHAPTER 3, JONES COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE OF TITLE VI- PROPERTY & LAND USE by adding additional definitions and replacing ARTICLE XVIII RESERVED FOR FUTURE USE WITH ARTICLE XVIII CRYPTOCURRENCY AND DATA MINING.

Section 2: The Chapter will be amended as follows:

ARTICLE XVIII CRYPTOCURRENCY AND DATA CENTERS

SECTION 1. INTENT

The intent of this Article is to promote and regulate the design, siting, construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of cryptocurrency facilities and data centers and to protect the health, safety and welfare of neighbors and the public, and to avoid unintended impacts on resources and adjacent uses.

SECTION 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Article is to provide the requirements necessary to obtain a permit to install and operate an active cryptocurrency facility or data center in Jones County.

SECTION 3. DEFINITIONS

As used in this Article, the following terms are hereby defined, in addition to those found in [Article III Definitions](#):

Clean Agent Fire Suppression system: A system that uses electrically non-conductive gaseous agents that do not leave residue upon evaporation to extinguish fires.

Closed-loop cooling system: A sealed system where a coolant circulates continuously, absorbing heat from a source, and then transferring that heat to a heat exchanger for removal, without the coolant ever being exposed to the environment.

Commercial cryptocurrency mining: The commercial process by which cryptocurrency transactions are verified and added to the public ledger, known as the block chain, and the means through which new units of cryptocurrencies are released through the use of server farms. Any equipment requiring a high-density load service, for the purposes of operating a cryptocurrency mining server farm, will constitute a commercial cryptocurrency mining operation.

Cryptocurrency: A digital currency in which encryption techniques are used to regulate the generation of units of currency and to verify the transfer of funds while operating independently of a central bank.

Cryptocurrency data center: Leased or owned boundaries of floor space devoted to the operating data processing equipment for commercial cryptocurrency mining: excludes spaces for data centers not otherwise engaged in commercial

cryptocurrency mining, commercial offices, storage, shipping and receiving, warehousing, or any other space that is not electronic processing.

Cryptocurrency server farm: Three or more interconnected computers housed together in a single facility either air-cooled or water cooled, whose primary function is to perform cryptocurrency mining or associated data processing.

Data mining: The commercial process by which volumes of data are analyzed to find patterns, discover trends, and gain insight into how the data can be used will constitute a commercial data mining operation.

High-density load service: Any individual service at or above 660 amps in which the energy use intensity (EUI) is calculated as greater than 250 kWh/Feet²/year in total for all operating square footage.

Liquid Cooling System: A method of cooling electronic components or other devices by circulating liquid coolant through them, to cool and absorb heat from components and then dissipate heat through a radiator.

SECTION 4: DATA CENTER AND CRYPTOCURRENCY OPERATIONS

Data Centers and cryptocurrency operations are allowed in the A2-Agricultural, C1-Commercial, C2-Highway Commercial, I-Industry and the I2-Heavy Industry districts.

- A. A site plan shall be submitted and reviewed prior to the approval of the data center or cryptocurrency facility installation and shall require a special use permit.
- B. Applicants wishing to site a new data center or cryptocurrency mining facility within Jones County must provide an application and site plan. Each project shall require a separate application. Data Centers or cryptocurrency mining facilities will use the Special Permitted Use application under the appropriate district. The application for a data center or cryptocurrency facility installation shall include the following information on the site plan or in narrative form, supplied by the data center or cryptocurrency installation owner.
 1. The name, address, EIN of Applicant, as well as the proposed property owners, including contact information (name, address, telephone and email) of the authorized representative.
 2. Project development timeline which indicates how the applicant will inform adjacent property owners and interested stakeholders in the community.
 3. Project development plan for the project, which plan shall contain aerial photographs of the entire proposed project area, showing the proposed location for the facility. The plan shall show property lines and setback distances.
 4. Documentation of Applicant's legal control over the private property necessary for the project, signed by the property owner.
 5. The applicable fee.

6. A report prepared by a qualified third-party analyzing the noise profile of the project area and the ability of the project to demonstrate compliance. The expense for testing and reporting the results, in written format to the County will be the responsibility of the applicant.
7. Ice mitigation report for public right of ways and neighboring properties approved by the Jones County Engineer and adjacent landowners.
8. Emergency Operations Procedures. A copy of the approved Emergency Operations Procedures shall be given to the system owner, the local fire department, the Sheriff, and Jones County Emergency Management. A permanent copy shall also be placed in an approved location to be accessible to facility personnel and emergency responders.
9. Decommissioning plan.

SECTION 5: PUBLIC NOTICE

Upon receipt of all applications and filing fees, the Land Use Administrator shall place on the appropriate Board or Commission's agenda for the next regular meeting and see that proper notice is provided. Proper notice shall consist of publication of the request along with the time and place for the hearing at least five (5) days prior to the hearing, but no longer than twenty (20) days prior to the hearing in all the officially designated newspapers of the County. In addition, certified mailings shall be sent to all property owners within a one (1) mile radius with the time and place for the hearing.

SECTION 6: GENERAL SITING AND DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

- A. Lot Size: Minimum lot size shall adhere to the minimum standards for the zoning district where the project is located. See Appendix A
- B. Setbacks: Structures must adhere to the minimum accessory structure setback standards for the zoning district where the project is located; greater setbacks may be recommended. See Appendix A
- C. Utility Connections: Reasonable efforts shall be made to place all utility connections from data or cryptocurrencies facilities underground, depending on appropriate soil conditions, shape and topography of the site, distance to the connection, or other conditions or requirements.
- D. Regulations: All structures shall be subject to bulk and height regulations in the underlying zoning district.
- E. Screening: A landscape buffer may be required to be installed and maintained during the life of the operation. Determination of the screening requirements will be made by the Board of Adjustment as part of the review and approval process and will be based on adjacent or nearby surrounding land uses and topography.

F. Signage: Each cryptocurrency mining and data mining operation shall provide 24- hour emergency contact signage visible at the access entrance. Signs shall include company name, owner/representative name, telephone number, and corresponding local power company and telephone number. All additional signage must adhere to the Jones County Sign ordinance, see Article XX.

G. Lighting: See Article XIX in the Jones County Zoning Ordinance.

H. Noise: Audible noise caused by data centers and cryptocurrency mining operations, not including existing ambient noise, shall not exceed sixty (60) dB continuously during daytime hours or a nighttime continuous sound level of fifty (50) dB.

1. In the event audible noise due to data centers and cryptocurrency mining operations contains a steady pure tone, such as a whine, screech, or hum, the standards for audible noise set forth shall be reduced by five (5) dB.

2. Audible noise caused by data centers or cryptocurrency mining facilities shall not exceed sixty (60) dB for more than 5 minutes within an hour, when measured at the exterior of any residence, school, hospital, church, or public library existing on the date of approval of the permit.

3. In the event the ambient noise level (exclusive of the development in question) exceeds the applicable standard given above, the applicable standard shall be adjusted so as to equal the ambient noise level. The ambient noise level shall be expressed in terms of the highest whole number sound pressure level in dB, which is exceeded for more than five (5) minutes per hour. Ambient noise levels shall be measured at the exterior of potentially affected existing residences, schools, hospitals, churches, and public libraries. Ambient noise level measurement techniques shall employ all practical means of reducing the effect of generated noise at the microphone.

- a. In the event the noise levels resulting from data centers and cryptocurrency facilities exceed the criteria listed above, a waiver to said levels may be granted by the Board of Adjustment provided that the following has been accomplished.

- i. Written waiver from the affected property owners has been obtained stating that they are aware of the data center or cryptocurrency facility and the noise limitations imposed by this Ordinance, and that consent is granted to allow noise levels to exceed the maximum limits otherwise allowed; and,

- ii. If the applicant wishes the waiver to apply to succeeding owners of the property, a permanent noise impact easement shall be recorded in the Office of the Jones County Recorder which describes the burdened properties and which advises all subsequent owners of the burdened property that the noise levels in excess of those permitted by this Ordinance may exist on or at the burdened property.

I. STRUCTURE: All structures shall have concrete foundations

1. Shall not be defective, decayed, or corroded.
2. The use of cargo containers, railroad cars, semi-truck trailers, and other similar storage containers for any component of the operation are prohibited.
3. A clean agent fire protection system must be provided and maintained in good working order within any structure which contains a server farm. High sensitivity smoke detectors shall be installed and operational in order to activate the clean agent fire suppression system.

J. ZONING: Data centers and cryptocurrency mining facilities will only be located in the A2-Agricultural, C1-Commercial, C2-Highway Commercial, I-Industry, I2-Heavy Industrial zoning districts.

K. COOLING SYSTEM: Data centers and cryptocurrency mining facilities shall be required to have a liquid cooling system.

1. A closed loop cooling system will be required.
2. The application shall include an estimate of annual water consumption for the site.
3. The intended source of water for the development, and documentation from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources along with Jones County Environmental Health affirming sufficient water resources exist to serve the site.
4. All necessary permits must be obtained from Jones County Environmental Health and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

L. EQUIPMENT: All servers, computers, processors, materials, and equipment must be enclosed within buildings.

M. ELECTRICAL POWER: Prior to issuance of a permit, the applicant shall provide written verification from the power provider that the applicant has calculated the maximum potential electrical consumption of the proposed use and has verified the utility supply equipment and related electrical infrastructure is sufficiently sized and can safely accommodate the proposed use during the power provider's peak consumption hours.

N. Ice Mitigation Report: Any data center or cryptocurrency facility shall insure that the amount of heat that is dissipated by the mining activity shall be monitored when the average daily temperature is 40 degrees Fahrenheit or less to ensure that there is no buildup of ice on neighboring properties and roadways.

1. In the instance that condensation and ice occur, there shall be an agreement between the facility's operational contact, owners of neighboring properties, and the County Engineer to mitigate ice on public right of way.

SECTION 7: DISCONTINUANCE, DECOMMISSIONING AND ABANDONMENT

The application must include a decommissioning plan that describes the anticipated life of the facility and the manner in which the project will be decommissioned; the site restoration actions; removal of equipment, the estimated costs in current dollars; and the method for ensuring that funds will be available for decommissioning and restoration.

Following a continuous one-year period in which no mining is generated, or if substantial action on the project is discontinued for a period of one year, the permit holder or successor and interest, will have one year to complete decommissioning of the data or cryptocurrency facility. Decommissioning shall be completed in accordance with the approved decommissioning plan. The landowner or tenant must notify the County when the project is discontinued.

APPROVAL:

First Consideration: April 29, 2025 , Book "U".

Second Consideration: May 6, 2025, Book "U".

Final Consideration & Adoption: May 13, 2025 Book "U".

Published: in the Monticello Express, and in the Anamosa Journal-Eureka.

I, Whitney Hein, Jones County Auditor, hereby certify that the foregoing Jones County, Iowa, Ordinance 2025-02, to amend the Jones County Code of Ordinances, was considered, approved, and published as stated.

Whitney Hein, Auditor

Date

