

Is a data center coming to Livingston Parish?

As rumors swirl, here's what we know.

- **BY GIGI LIMAN | Staff writer**
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In recent days, posts circulating on social media have claimed that one of the centers used by tech companies to power AI computing is on its way, asserting that a deal has been made and that elected officials have signed nondisclosure agreements (NDAs) to keep it hidden from the public.

In response, Parish President Randy Delatte put out a video Tuesday saying he had not signed an NDA and that there was “no data center project that I can announce today.”

But that doesn’t mean there might not be one in the future.

A 691-acre commercial tract off La. 447 in Walker is on the market, and its broker is pitching it as a potential data center, Delatte said in an interview.

“There has been a broker that wants to bring a data center in,” Delatte said. “He doesn’t have a client yet, so he has to go through that process, and the client has to look to see if that can work for them.”

Delatte said he supports the idea of bringing a data center to the property, contingent on the details.

“I would surely try my best for that to happen for nothing else but the amount of money that would come in to improve the services that Livingston Parish needs,” Delatte said.

The land, brokered by Reeder Capital Partners of Texas, had previously been pitched as a residential subdivision, then a garbage dump, then a Buc-ee’s. Earlier this year, it almost became a battery plant, Delatte said.

The switch from residential to commercial zoning helped fuel the rumors about an AI facility coming to town, along with reports that a Livingston Parish Council member signed an NDA in 2025.

Delatte pointed out the property would bring in around \$140 million in annual property tax as a reason to back the data center idea. With that level of income, he said, residents could receive rebates on their Livingston Parish government taxes.

Data centers also offer permanent technical jobs to surrounding residents once the facilities are up and running and construction jobs before then. Delatte said he has met several Livingston residents who commute to Richland Parish to work on construction of a data center there.

“To me, it's a win-win,” Delatte said. “But I will listen to the will of the people.”

He said he would hope to use additional revenue from the infrastructure project to increase pay for teachers and sheriff's deputies, much like has been done in Richland Parish, where Meta is building a \$50 billion Meta Hyperion center.

Some teachers in Richland Parish will rake in an extra \$50,000 in bonuses thanks to the sales tax boom brought in by Meta, according to the parish's chamber of commerce.

“It's not fair for our teachers to make less money than surrounding parishes. It's not fair for our law enforcement, people who risk their lives on a daily basis, to be making \$37,000 a year,” Delatte said.

A Livingston Parish center would have a lot of company in the state. Construction is underway on a \$2.5 billion Hut 8 artificial intelligence data center in West Feliciana Parish. Amazon is building an \$18 billion multicampus data center development that will span Caddo and Bossier parishes. Another \$3.6 billion AI intelligence factory is planned for Rapides Parish.

While data centers provide massive financial rewards to their communities, they can also impose burdens on nearby residents.

Concerns about the developments have largely focused on the massive amounts of water and electricity the centers require, which has led to increased energy and utility bills for nearby residents of existing centers. The facilities also emit loud, continuous noise that can seep beyond the private property.

In June, Gov. Jeff Landry signed an executive order that places some restraints on the impact data centers can have on the cost of energy.

Several parishes have attempted to enact proactive policies regulating data centers before they face a proposal.

The Ascension Parish Council is moving to create new rules for how and where data centers could pop up across the parish, even though none have been proposed there, and the St. Charles Parish Council passed zoning and noise ordinances in June directed at future data center developments.

Livingston does not have parish-specific ordinances, and none have been proposed, but council members reached for comment expressed caution about the prospect of a data center coming to town.

“I think there’s a huge discrepancy between what it could be and what it is,” council member John Mangus said. “I’m willing to entertain it, but I can’t say I’m 100% for it.”

“Right now, I’m for holding back,” council member Joe Erdey said. “I personally need more information, and we don’t have that yet.”

Delatte said a deal would work only if residents’ water and utilities bills would be protected. Data centers are increasingly using closed-loop systems for water consumption, which recirculate water and limit additional usage. This type of system, which will be used by the Meta center in Richland Parish, would be necessary for a proposed deal to get Delatte’s stamp of approval, he said.

He added that he would want a hypothetical data center to furnish its own electricity. Whether that would ultimately be required would be part of the discussion if the proposal advances to that stage.