

**Press Release
July 24, 2025****Contact Information:**

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Topic of Press Release: Proposed Data Center

The **City of Menomonie (CoM) Common Council** recently referred a petition for annexation and rezoning of certain lands along County Highway B—between 650th Avenue and 690th Avenue—from the **Town of Red Cedar**. This **Petition for Direct Annexation by Unanimous Approval** was filed by the current property owners. The purpose of the petition is to facilitate the potential development of a **data center by Balloonist, LLC**.

The proposal is scheduled for discussion by the **CoM Plan Commission** on **Monday, July 28, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.**, in the **Common Council Chambers** at **Menomonie City Hall** (800 Wilson Avenue). During the meeting, the public is invited to comment on the proposed zoning. The Plan Commission welcomes public input, offering a significant opportunity for residents to share their perspectives. The Commission will vote on a recommendation regarding the zoning, which will be forwarded to the Common Council for further consideration.

The next step in the process will occur at the **Common Council meeting** scheduled for **Monday, August 4, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.**, also in the **Common Council Chambers** at **City Hall**. During this meeting, citizens will again have the opportunity to comment—both during the **Public Comments** portion of the agenda and during the **Public Hearing**. The **Mayor and Common Council** encourage community feedback on matters affecting the City. The Council may take formal action on the proposed annexation and rezoning at that time.

The CoM acknowledges community concerns surrounding the potential data center development. These include the **conversion of farmland, water usage, and energy consumption**.

According to the **2022 USDA Census of Agriculture** for Dunn County:

- There were **260,795 acres** of cropland, of which
- **51,998 acres** were irrigated.

The proposed annexation and rezoning would impact approximately **0.12%** of all cropland and **0.31%** of irrigated cropland in Dunn County.

Some data centers in the U.S. use **evaporative cooling systems**, which consume significant quantities of water. However, the potential **Balloonist facility** is proposing to use a **closed-loop**



cooling system. This system would require an estimated average of **75,000 gallons per day** of municipal water and wastewater. Based on current usage, this would make Balloonist the **fifth-largest** water user in the City, behind **Cardinal FG, 3M, ConAgra, and UW-Stout**.

Regarding energy use, the **City of Menomonie does not operate an electric utility**. Balloonist is actively working with **Xcel Energy** and the **Wisconsin Public Service Commission** to address energy supply and infrastructure.

In conclusion, **annexation and rezoning do not guarantee** that a data center will be built. Should Balloonist move forward with a development and request funding from the CoM, the public will have **additional opportunities to provide input** and receive detailed information on how the facility could affect the community environmentally, economically, and culturally.

More information will be shared as it becomes available. The City of Menomonie thanks all residents for their engagement and thoughtful input.

Eric Atkinson
City Administrator