

Project Heartland – Aligned Coal City Technology Campus

Planned Unit Development Submission: Introductory Narrative

Applicant: Aligned Data Centers | Draft prepared October 5, 2026 for PUD Docs #2 resubmittal

Introduction

Aligned Data Centers (“Aligned”) respectfully submits this application for Preliminary and Final Planned Unit Development (PUD) and Preliminary and Final Plat of Subdivision for a proposed technology campus and adjacent public utility substation. After proposed roadway dedications, the site is approximately 313 acres at the southeast corner of East Reed Road and South Carbon Hill Road. Most of the site is already within the Village of Coal City (“Village”) and zoned I-1 Light Industrial. A related annexation and map amendment request will bring three adjacent parcels into the Village and zone them I-1, consistent with the surrounding property.

The proposed development is a secure, low-traffic, and low-water-use digital infrastructure campus. It is designed as a unified campus with extensive perimeter setbacks and landscaping buffers. Operational areas sit toward the interior of the site. They are surrounded by stormwater basins, open space, landscaped berms and screening, providing physical and visual separation from neighboring uses, far in excess of existing code requirements; reflecting the superior design principles advanced in the PUD process. This resubmittal incorporates feedback from the PUD Review Committee’s initial comments, as well as ongoing dialogue and public meetings with Village staff, the Committee, and residents. These updated plans build upon our formal July, 2026 submittal, which evolved from the initial public feedback sessions held in February 2026.

Proposed Use and Operations

A data center houses the servers, networking, electrical, and cooling equipment that support the digital services used by residents, businesses, schools, healthcare providers, and public agencies. The campus will operate 24 hours a day with minimal nighttime activity. Site activity will consist mainly of operations staff, maintenance technicians, security personnel, and periodic vendors. The campus is not a warehouse, freight terminal, manufacturing facility, or customer-facing commercial center. Its truck docks serve only equipment delivery, replacement, and maintenance. At full build-out, the campus is expected to support approximately 360 permanent full-time operational positions with Aligned Data Centers. Based on the size of the campus, we estimate that our customers / tenants would have another 390 full-time employees. Bringing the estimated total full-time employment of the campus to 750 employees.

Site and Subdivision

The development combines five parcels (PINs 09-15-100-001, 09-15-100-003, 09-15-100-009, 09-15-300-001, and 09-15-300-002) of undeveloped agricultural land, and three residential parcels (PINs 09-15-100-004, 09-15-100-006, 09-15-100-008). The land has about 13 feet of grade change, sloping to the northwest and southwest. The site will be subdivided into two lots:

- **Lot 1 – Public Utility Substation (±29.9 acres).** This unmanned substation will be owned and operated by Commonwealth Edison (ComEd). It is a conditional public use, sits next to existing ComEd transmission right-of-way, and will have its own onsite stormwater facilities. The variances requested for Lot 1 reflect security standards for critical utility transmission infrastructure.
- **Lot 2 – Technology Campus (±282.5 acres).** The proposed campus consists of eleven data center buildings each with administrative areas, mechanical and backup power generation yards, truck docks, parking, internal drive aisles, stormwater facilities, and perimeter screening. A substantial reduction in requested variances is reflected in this submission, pursuant to feedback from the PUD Committee and the public.

Residential parcels 09-15-100-004, 09-15-100-006, 09-15-100-008 are currently under Grundy County jurisdiction. They are contiguous to the Village, lie within the Village's 2035 Comprehensive Planning Area, and are proposed for annexation and rezoning to I-1 at the same time as this application.

Project Summary

Site Information	Project Heartland
Location	Southeast corner of East Reed Road and South Carbon Hill Road, Village of Coal City, Grundy County, IL
Gross Site Area	±312.4 acres (eight parcels)
Lot 1 – ComEd Public Utility Substation	±29.9 acres; conditional public use; unmanned
Lot 2 – Technology Campus	±282.5 acres (±12,304,800 SF)
Existing / Proposed Zoning	I-1 Light Industrial / PUD (Parcels 09-15-100-004, 09-15-100-006, 09-15-100-008 to be annexed and rezoned I-1)
Perimeter Berms	Minimum 6 ft landscaped berms
Water demand	18,678 gpd average day; 70,356 gpd maximum day (full campus)
Wastewater	18,678 gpd average day; 70,356 gpd maximum day (full campus)
Cooling	Non-evaporative, air-cooled closed-loop system
Public Utility Extensions	16-inch water main - East Reed Road from South Broadway 30-inch sanitary sewer - South Broadway and East Reed Road (constructed at no cost to Coal City).
Access	One primary secured entrance on East Reed Road; emergency-only access on South Carbon Hill Road
Aligned Permanent Site Employment	+/-360 full-time Aligned Operations Employees (full build-out)

Zoning Information	Coal City I-1 Standards	Lot 2 - PUD Standards
Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	3.0 FAR Maximum	1.0 FAR Maximum
Building Height Maximum	30 ft + 2 ft for each 1 ft of building height over 30 ft	40 ft Facing Road Frontages 75 ft Facing Rear / Interior Side (2 building maximum)
Building Setbacks	<u>Existing Coal City I-1 Code</u> Front (Reed Rd) = 40 ft Corner Side (Carbon Hill Rd) = 40 ft Side (east) = 10 ft Rear (south) = 15 ft	<u>Proposed PUD:</u> Front (Reed Rd) = 250 ft Corner Side (Carbon Hill Rd) = 200 ft Side (east) = 125 ft Rear (south) = 500 ft
Open Space	20% Open Space (CC - Planned Development Standard)	20% Open Space
Parking	1 per Employee + 0.5 Stalls per 1,000 s.f. GFA	2.25 Stalls per 10,000 s.f.

Site Design, Setbacks and Screening

Reflecting superior design principles, Aligned has revised the plan to place buildings well beyond code-required setbacks. In response to Committee comments, Aligned has made the following design changes:

- Increased all setback requirements.
- Increased the landscaping requirements within the 6-foot height berm.
- Oriented mechanical yards away from Public Roadways, preserving viewshed corridors along South Carbon Road and East Reed Road.
- Relocated chillers to building rooftops.
- Committed to single-story buildings along all roadway frontages.
- Self-restricted building height to 40 feet
- Enhanced Building Design Elements Along Reed Road Corridor
- Self-restricted FAR requirements

The administrative portions of the buildings, which are architecturally enhanced, face the public rights-of-way. Architectural screen walls will block view lines of the mechanical yards and truck dock areas. Existing perimeter trees will be preserved where feasible. This project achieves Open Space requirements by code and exceeds Coal City Landscape requirements. . The density of the campus has been significantly reduced as the floor area ratio (FAR) is set to 1.0 one-third of the permitted maximum. As a result, lot coverage stays low and the campus keeps a large share of its land as open space.

Water, Wastewater and Cooling

The campus uses a non-evaporative, air-cooled, closed-loop cooling system that does not consume water for operational cooling after initial setup. The day to day water use for the campus is mainly domestic demands to support administrative spaces (restrooms, breakrooms). Total campus operational demand is estimated at 18,678 gallons per day on an average day and 70,356 gallons per day on a maximum day, with projected maximum wastewater discharge of about 70,356 gallons per day. These figures are far lower than many manufacturing uses that would be permitted in the I-1 district, and the average daily usage represents a small percentage of Coal City's current water system capacity. No on-site wells are proposed.

Public utilities will be upgraded and extended at Aligned's expense to serve the site, including the installation of a 16-inch water main along East Reed Road, and a 30-inch sanitary sewer main along South Broadway Road and East Reed Road. These improvements also bring critical infrastructure to an area identified by the Village as a potential target area for future growth.

Sound

Aligned has withdrawn its earlier request for an emergency-operations sound deviation. The campus will meet the Village of Coal City sound ordinance standards in all operating scenarios. The sound modeling and mitigation measures used shows an ability to comply with both Coal City and Illinois Pollution Control Board sound standards. Aligned will also install a permanent acoustic monitoring station on the property and provide its data to the Village each year.

Backup Power, Fuel and Safety

Each building will have a dedicated yard of EPA Tier IV-compliant diesel generators. These generators are used only for backup power if a utility outage occurs. In order to ensure proper operations in the event of an emergency, the generators do require monthly maintenance testing. The typical generator testing cadence is 15 minutes per generator per month, with units staggered for testing so that no more than two generators per building run at once. All generator testing will be done during business days and business hours 7 AM – 6 PM. Diesel fuel for generators will be stored in UL 142-listed, double-wall sub-base tanks. These tanks have interstitial leak detection, overfill protection and spill containment that meet federal Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasure (SPCC) requirements. Generator run-time limits will be set by the Illinois EPA Bureau of Air permit. Battery systems will use UL 9540A-listed equipment, and fire and life-safety systems will go through the standard building and fire review process.

Access, Traffic and Roadway Improvements

At full build-out daily operations will use a single secured entrance on East Reed Road. A separate emergency-only access with a Knox box will be provided on South Carbon Hill Road; Following the guidance of the Traffic Impact Analysis, Aligned will build a westbound left-turn lane at the site entrance and widen and reconstruct Reed Road and reconstruct the Carbon Hill Road along the site frontages.

To minimize traffic disruptions during construction, Aligned is agreeing to self-restrict traffic patterns. The proposed construction traffic (trucking) will be restricted to IL Rt. 55 for regional North/South movements and Reed Road for East/West access to the site. A temporary traffic signal at Reed Road and Broadway Road will be utilized for traffic control during construction. A Road Use Agreement and Traffic Control Plan is being worked on with Grundy County. Reed Road Widening and Turn Lanes for site access will be completed as one of the initial steps in the project construction so that turning movements into and out of site during construction do not cause East/West delays on Reed Road.

Stormwater and Floodplain

Dry detention basins will be built throughout the campus, mainly along its outer edges. They will control runoff rates in line with Village requirements and adopted Will County Stormwater Ordinance, provide quality water treatment that the current parcels lack, and add separation from neighbors. The Maine Township ditch along the south side of Reed Road will be relocated and improved to a more gradual, stable section. The culvert at Reed Road and Carbon Hill Road will be updated, which modeling shows will lower upstream flood elevations. Floodplain map revisions will be coordinated with the Village, IDNR, and FEMA.

Lighting and Security

Site lighting will be downcast, shielded, and is designed to produce zero footcandles at the property boundaries. The campus will be fully secured with perimeter fencing, controlled-access gates, video surveillance and 24-hour private, unarmed security.

Phasing

The campus will be built in phases that align with substation delivery, utility energization, and customer needs. The overall duration of construction is expected to be 2027-2033. Construction will begin with mass grading of the entire property, installing all detention facilities and landscape berms. Building construction will proceed generally from south to north. Each building is expected to take about 12 to 18 months to deliver. Each project phase independently meets the PUD requirements, even if no later phase is built.

Requested PUD Deviations

The Village does not yet have data-center-specific regulations. The PUD therefore uses the I-1 district and the Industrial Development Design Standards and Guidelines (IDDSG) as its baseline, with targeted deviations offset by enhancements within PUD requirements. Highlights:

- **Lot 1 (substation):** A deviation is requested to achieve ComEd safety, security and reliability obligations to include: an 11-foot security fence with barbed-wire topper; a 104-foot utility communications structure; gravel safe-passage areas; above-ground utility lines; no parking, loading or water service for the unmanned facility; and related lighting, landscaping and easement adjustments.
- **Lot 2 (campus):** Data center and accessory electrical, battery, fuel and cooling uses listed as permitted uses; a height allowance of up to 75 feet, limited to the southeast-corner buildings; parking and loading ratios suited to data centers; 8-foot security fencing; above-ground high- and medium-voltage facilities; berms allowed in place of

certain screen walls; and screening requirements focused within 300 feet of public rights-of-way.

A consolidated deviation-and-benefit table is included with the resubmitted PUD Narrative.

Community and Economic Benefits

The project is a significant private investment that will substantially enlarge and diversify the Village's tax base. It requires relatively few Village services, such as schools, police and fire, compared with other uses. The project will:

- Generate in excess of \$100,000,000 per year in total tax revenues to the Village at full buildout.
- Extend water and sewer infrastructure southwest of the Village to a potential future economic development area
- Improve East Reed Road and South Carbon Hill Road viewsheds, landscaping and utilities, among other elements
- Deliver a new ComEd switching station that could support future load growth in the area.
- Create 1,300+ construction jobs under an executed Project Labor Agreement with local trade unions.
- Create ~360 high-quality long-term skilled jobs with Aligned in the ongoing operation and maintenance of the campus, and a total of 750+ jobs when projected customer employment is included.

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and PUD Criteria

The campus fits the I-1 district's purpose of low-nuisance industrial uses compatible with the surrounding community. It forms a logical transition between the heavier industrial uses to the east and the agricultural and single-family uses to the west. It also meets the Village's PUD approval criteria:

- Superior design, delivered through larger setbacks, berms, open space, and architectural enhancement of all facades facing public streets.
- Consistency with changed conditions since the 2014 Comprehensive Plan.
- Protection of public welfare through meeting or exceeding sound, lighting, spill-prevention and life-safety requirements.
- Compatibility with surrounding properties.
- Preservation of natural drainageways, where feasible.
- Adequate circulation.
- Low demand on public services.

Conclusion

Through this PUD, Aligned seeks to establish a clear, predictable framework that defines how the campus will be designed, constructed, screened, accessed, operated, and regulated.

We deeply appreciate the open dialogue and transparent process we've shared with the Coal City community. Welcoming over 300 thoughtful questions - covering everything from standard land use items to our long-term operations - allowed us to truly listen to your needs. This invaluable feedback has helped us refine our high-quality designs into a proposal that maximizes the benefits for Coal City residents, resulting in a much stronger and more collaborative project than our initial February presentation. We look forward to advancing the project with the Planning & Zoning Board, the Village Board of Trustees, and Coal City residents.