

Project Cornmaze

Frequently Asked Questions

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about Project Cornmaze.

We understand that a proposal of this size brings questions, and we believe the community deserves clear, factual information throughout the planning process. This FAQ is designed to answer the questions we've heard most often from residents, business owners, elected officials and community organizations.

Project Cornmaze remains in the planning and review phase. Before any construction could begin, the project must complete extensive engineering and environmental studies, local review processes and obtain all required permits and approvals.

As additional information becomes available, this FAQ will continue to be updated.

Fast Facts

- The proposed project would redevelop an existing industrial site: The property is currently home to an active quarry. If approved, the project would replace one industrial use with another that operates very differently.
- The proposed facility is expected to use less water than the current quarry. The project is planned to utilize a high-efficiency closed-loop cooling system that continuously recirculates water.
- Once operational the facility is expected to generate substantially fewer daily truck trips than today's quarry operations.
- Overall emissions are expected to be lower than the current industrial use. Unlike quarry operations, data centers do not involve blasting, crushing or continuous material extraction. Backup generators operate only during emergencies and limited maintenance testing.
- Infrastructure needed to serve the project would be funded by the developer.
- Approximately 1,000 construction jobs and more than 50-100 full time employees are anticipated. In addition to direct employment, the project is expected to create opportunities for local contractors, suppliers and service providers.
- The project remains in the planning and review process. Traffic, water, groundwater, environmental, air quality and noise studies are currently underway.
- The project will not include nuclear power generation.
- Panattoni does not have non-disclosure agreements with the Towns of Beloit or Turtle, the City of Beloit, Rock County or any other government agency related to Project Cornmaze.
- Residents will continue to have opportunities to ask questions, attend meetings and stay informed as the project moves through the public review process.

Project Overview

What is Project Cornmaze?

Project Cornmaze is the proposed development of a data center campus on property located within the Towns of Beloit and Turtle.

The project is being evaluated on land that is currently used as an active quarry. If approved, it would redevelop an existing industrial property into a campus supporting digital infrastructure used by businesses, governments and consumers around the world.

What is a data center?

A data center is a highly secure facility that houses computer servers and networking equipment responsible for storing, processing and transmitting digital information.

Most people rely on data centers every day without realizing it. Every email sent, online purchase made, streaming movie watched, banking transaction completed, medical record accessed or artificial intelligence application used depends on data centers operating behind the scenes.

As technology continues to evolve, data centers have become an essential part of modern infrastructure—similar to highways, airports and electric substations. They support businesses, schools, hospitals, manufacturers, emergency services and countless online services people depend on every day.

Why are more data centers needed?

Demand for digital infrastructure continues to grow rapidly.

Businesses increasingly rely on cloud computing to operate their organizations. Hospitals securely manage electronic medical records. Schools provide online educational resources. Manufacturers use automation and artificial intelligence. Families stream entertainment, store photographs online and work remotely.

Artificial intelligence has accelerated this demand even further. AI applications require significantly more computing power than traditional software, increasing the need for facilities capable of securely processing and storing enormous amounts of information.

Communities across the country are experiencing increased investment in digital infrastructure because these facilities have become essential to supporting economic growth and everyday life.

Why were Beloit and Turtle selected?

Selecting a location for a data center involves evaluating dozens of technical, environmental and infrastructure considerations.

Among the most important are:

- Supportive Community
- Reliable electrical infrastructure
- Water and wastewater availability
- Transportation access
- Existing land use
- Environmental conditions
- Compatibility with surrounding development
- Local planning and zoning requirements

The Beloit and Turtle area offers many of these characteristics and includes property that is already used for industrial purposes.

That said, identifying a site is only the beginning of the process. The project must still demonstrate that it can meet all local, state and federal requirements before construction could occur.

Why was this property selected?

The current property is already an active industrial site.

That distinction is important because redevelopment of an existing industrial property differs significantly from introducing industrial activity onto undeveloped land.

Today, quarry operations involve blasting, excavation, crushing equipment and regular heavy truck traffic. A data center operates almost entirely within enclosed buildings housing computer equipment.

If approved, the proposed development is expected to:

- Use less water than the current quarry.
- Generate substantially less truck traffic.
- Produce lower overall emissions.
- Reduce noise levels.
- Provide a long-term productive use for an existing industrial property.

Because the property is already industrial, many of the infrastructure needs associated with industrial development have already been considered as part of its existing use.

Why is redeveloping an existing quarry significant?

Many residents have asked why comparisons are made between the proposed project and the existing quarry.

The answer is simple: understanding today's use provides important context for evaluating tomorrow's.

Rather than comparing the project to an undeveloped field or residential neighborhood, it is more appropriate to compare it to the property's existing industrial operation.

While every development has impacts that must be carefully evaluated, current planning indicates the proposed data center would:

- Use less water.
- Generate less truck traffic.
- Produce lower emissions.
- Eliminate blasting operations and associated noise.
- Operate with more consistent and predictable activity.

Those differences are one reason the project team believes redevelopment of the property deserves careful consideration through the public review process.

Who is Panattoni?

Founded in 1986, Panattoni is a private, family-owned industrial real estate developer with nearly four decades of experience developing industrial, logistics and technology facilities.

Throughout its history, the company has emphasized thoughtful planning, quality construction and long-term relationships with the communities where it builds.

Panattoni develops projects throughout North America and internationally while working closely with local governments, utility providers, engineers and community stakeholders.

What is Panattoni's role?

Panattoni serves as the project developer.

Its responsibilities include coordinating engineering and environmental studies, working with utility providers, preparing development plans, guiding the project through local approvals and engaging with the community throughout the planning process.

The developer is also responsible for funding project-specific infrastructure improvements required to serve the development.

Is this project already approved?

No. The project remains in the planning and review process.

Before construction could begin, the project must complete environmental studies, engineering evaluations, utility coordination, local planning reviews and obtain all required permits and approvals.

What happens next?

Over the coming months, the project team will continue completing engineering and environmental studies while working with local governments, regulatory agencies and utility providers.

As studies are completed, they will help inform project design and local decision-making.

The project will continue moving through the public planning process before any decisions regarding construction are made.

As additional information becomes available, this FAQ will continue to be updated.

Community Benefits

How does this project benefit the community?

If approved, Project Cornmaze is expected to provide both short-term and long-term economic benefits.

During construction, the project is anticipated to support approximately 1,000 construction jobs across a wide range of skilled trades and professional services. These include heavy equipment operators, electricians, plumbers, concrete contractors, steel fabricators, engineers, surveyors, environmental consultants, trucking companies and numerous other construction-related professions.

Once operational, the campus is expected to support 50-100 full time employees responsible for facility management, engineering, maintenance, security, operations and information technology. While data centers generally employ fewer people than manufacturing facilities of similar size, these positions are typically highly skilled and offer long-term career opportunities.

Beyond direct employment, projects of this scale create additional demand for local restaurants, hotels, suppliers, professional services, maintenance contractors and other businesses that support both construction and ongoing operations.

How many construction jobs will be created?

Current planning estimates approximately 1,000 construction jobs at peak construction.

Construction of a large data center is a multi-year effort involving numerous contractors and specialty trades. The workforce changes throughout the project as different phases of construction occur, creating opportunities across a variety of industries.

In addition to workers on-site, construction generates economic activity for local suppliers, equipment rental companies, fuel providers, trucking firms, engineering consultants and many other businesses that support major construction projects.

The project team has also indicated a commitment to working with local contractors whenever practical and encouraging competitive opportunities for qualified local firms.

How many permanent jobs will the facility create?

The project is currently expected to create 50-100 full time employee positions.

These jobs may include facility engineers, electrical and mechanical technicians, operations managers, security personnel, maintenance staff, environmental professionals and administrative positions.

While the number of employees working inside a data center is generally smaller than many manufacturing facilities, these facilities operate continuously and require skilled professionals to monitor systems, maintain equipment and ensure reliable operation.

The economic impact of these positions also extends beyond the facility itself, supporting additional employment throughout the local economy.

Will local businesses have opportunities to participate?

Yes. Construction of a project this size requires hundreds of subcontractors, suppliers and service providers. Opportunities typically include site preparation, excavation, concrete, structural steel, electrical work, plumbing, HVAC, landscaping, trucking, surveying, environmental consulting, engineering and many other specialties.

Once operational, the facility also requires ongoing services including maintenance, janitorial services, landscaping, equipment servicing, security, waste management, food service and other professional support.

The project team intends to work with qualified local businesses whenever practical throughout both construction and operations.

Will this project increase property tax revenue?

Yes. If approved, Project Cornmaze is expected to become a significant long-term contributor to the local property tax base.

Property tax revenue generated by commercial development helps support schools, local government services, public safety, transportation infrastructure and other community priorities.

Is the tax revenue a one-time benefit?

No. Construction of the facility represents only the beginning of the project's tax contributions.

The buildings themselves remain taxable into operation.

This ongoing investment helps create a stable, long-term source of tax revenue that continues well beyond the initial construction period.

Why are data centers considered long-term investments?

Unlike some industrial facilities that may relocate or significantly change operations over time, data centers are designed as permanent infrastructure.

The buildings, electrical systems, cooling equipment and utility infrastructure represent substantial long-term investments that are intended to support decades of operation.

While the technology inside the buildings changes regularly, the buildings themselves continue operating and generating economic activity for many years.

Will the project support workforce development?

Yes. Panattoni has a history of partnering with workforce development organizations and skilled trade programs in communities where it builds.

For Project Cornmaze, the developer intends to work with local education and workforce partners to help connect students and skilled workers with construction and long-term employment opportunities created by the project.

These partnerships may include apprenticeship opportunities, scholarships, workforce training and outreach to local trade organizations.

Water

How are the data center buildings cooled?

Project Cornmaze is expected to utilize a high-efficiency closed-loop cooling system. Unlike many industrial cooling processes that continuously consume large amounts of water, a closed-loop system continually recirculates water within the facility to maximize efficiency and minimize consumption.

The cooling system is made up of multiple independent loops that transfer heat away from the computer equipment. Two of those loops utilize specialized heat-transfer fluids rather than water to improve efficiency. The primary facility water loop continuously recirculates treated water rather than discharging it after a single use.

Because the water remains within the system, only limited amounts of makeup water are required over time to maintain proper operating levels.

This approach is one of the reasons the proposed facility is expected to use significantly less water than the current quarry operation.

How much water will the facility use?

Once operational, the facility will average under 20,000 gallons per day and have a maximum of 50,000 gallons peak. This will be for domestic purposes, culinary and equipment washing.

It is also important to remember that water demand varies throughout the year based on weather conditions and operational needs. Because the cooling system continually recirculates water, the facility does not require a constant supply of fresh water to replace water that has been discharged.

The final water demand will be confirmed as engineering and utility studies are completed.

Where will the water come from?

The project team is currently working with the City of Beloit and local utility providers to complete detailed water and wastewater studies.

Those studies evaluate available capacity, infrastructure requirements and the most appropriate way to serve the facility while maintaining reliable service for existing customers.

No final utility connections have been approved, and the results of these studies will help determine the final design.

Where does the cooling water go?

Under normal operations, cooling water does not leave the system, and water continually circulates within enclosed piping and cooling equipment.

When periodic maintenance is required, typically every seven to ten years, the cooling fluids are removed, collected and managed in accordance with all applicable federal, state and local regulations. Depending on local requirements, those materials are either transported to an approved treatment facility or managed through another approved disposal process.

Will this project affect my water pressure?

No. Based on the project's current design, the facility is not expected to affect residential water pressure.

Water infrastructure serving the project will be designed in coordination with local utility providers to ensure reliable service for both the development and existing customers.

Will this project affect my water bill?

The project is not expected to increase residential water rates as a result of infrastructure needed specifically to serve the facility.

Infrastructure improvements required for Project Cornmaze would be funded by the developer rather than existing residents.

Water rates remain under the authority of the local utility provider and applicable regulatory processes, but the project itself is not expected to require homeowners to pay for infrastructure serving the development.

Will the facility use water from the local aquifer?

Groundwater and aquifer studies are currently underway to better understand local water resources and ensure they are protected.

The existing property already contains numerous wells associated with the current quarry operation. Those existing conditions are being evaluated alongside future water supply planning as part of the project's engineering review.

The purpose of these studies is to ensure any future water use is responsible, sustainable and consistent with regulatory requirements.

Will PFAS be used in the cooling system?

No. The planned cooling system and treatment chemicals are not designed to contain PFAS compounds.

What happens if there is a leak or spill?

Although the cooling system is designed to be fully enclosed, the facility will maintain multiple layers of protection should an unexpected equipment failure occur.

Cooling equipment includes sealed piping, leak detection systems, secondary containment features and continuous monitoring.

In addition, the facility will operate under a Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasure (SPCC) Plan that complies with federal regulations. This plan establishes procedures for responding to any unlikely release and ensures materials are managed in accordance with federal, state and local environmental requirements.

Electricity

How much electricity will the facility use?

Facilities of the site's projected size require significant electrical infrastructure to support continuous operation. Planning for that infrastructure begins years before a facility becomes operational and is coordinated closely with the serving utility.

The project team is working with Alliant Energy to evaluate the infrastructure required to support the project while maintaining reliable service for existing customers.

Why do data centers require so much electricity?

Data centers house thousands of computer servers operating continuously to process and store digital information.

Artificial intelligence, cloud computing, healthcare systems, financial transactions, streaming services and countless business applications all rely on these computing systems.

As demand for digital services has increased, so has the amount of electricity needed to power the equipment that supports them.

Will my electric bill increase because of this project?

Project-specific electrical infrastructure would be funded by the developer.

Residential electric rates are established through regulatory processes overseen by the Wisconsin Public Service Commission rather than by individual development projects.

While utilities periodically review rates for many reasons, Alliant Energy has committed that existing customers will not pay for new large-energy-use growth. The utility follows a strict principle that if you use energy, you pay for it. And customers who use large amounts of energy pay for the electric grid investments needed to serve them, not existing customers. Project Cornmaze will be no different.

Alliant Energy ensures that when growth is structured the right way, it can strengthen the grid and help keep energy costs lower for everyone long term. For more information visit:

www.alliantenergy.com/communitygrowth

Will this project require new power plants?

Decisions regarding future electric generation are made by utilities, regional transmission organizations and regulatory agencies, not by the project developer.

Utilities continually evaluate future electricity demand from homes, businesses and industry when planning long-term generation resources.

Any future generation decisions would be made through established regulatory and planning processes.

Will this project increase fossil fuel use?

Electricity generation decisions are made by utilities and regional grid operators based on overall system demand and long-term planning.

Project Cornmaze does not determine how electricity is generated.

The facility itself does not produce emissions during normal operations, and the proposed land use is expected to generate lower overall emissions than the current quarry operation.

Who pays for electrical infrastructure improvements?

The developer would fund infrastructure improvements required specifically to serve the project.

This includes project-specific electrical facilities necessary to connect the campus to the existing transmission system.

The project is not expected to shift those infrastructure costs to local governments.

Who regulates Alliant Energy?

Alliant Energy is regulated by the Wisconsin Public Service Commission (PSC).

The PSC oversees electric utility rates, service reliability, major infrastructure investments and numerous other aspects of utility operations.

Environment, Construction & Community Process

What environmental studies are currently underway?

A number of technical studies are currently being completed to evaluate the proposed project and ensure it complies with all applicable local, state and federal requirements.

- These studies include:
 - Traffic Impact Study
 - Water Supply Study
 - Wastewater Study
 - Groundwater and Aquifer Evaluation
 - Phase I Environmental Site Assessment
 - Air Quality and Air Permitting Review
 - Noise Analysis
 - Wetland Delineation
 - Biological Resource Evaluation
 - Cultural Resource Review
 - Stormwater Management Design

Each study examines a different aspect of the project and helps inform both the final design and regulatory review process.

How are wetlands and natural resources being protected?

Environmental specialists are evaluating wetlands, wildlife habitat, vegetation and other natural resources throughout the property.

If wetlands or other regulated resources are identified, the project must comply with all applicable federal, state and local regulations governing their protection.

These evaluations also help determine appropriate building locations, stormwater systems and site design features that minimize environmental impacts.

How will stormwater be managed?

Like all new commercial and industrial developments, Project Cornmaze will be required to manage stormwater on-site.

Stormwater detention and retention systems are designed to temporarily store rainfall and release it gradually after storms.

These systems reduce flooding, protect downstream drainage systems and improve water quality by allowing sediment and pollutants to settle before water leaves the site.

Stormwater infrastructure is reviewed by regulatory agencies as part of the permitting process.

Will construction create disruptions?

Construction of any large project creates temporary impacts, including increased traffic, equipment activity and construction noise.

Construction schedules, traffic management plans and erosion control measures are all developed as part of the engineering process to help minimize impacts on surrounding properties.

Construction activities are temporary, while the completed facility is expected to operate with substantially less daily activity than the existing quarry.

Will the facility create noise?

A detailed acoustic analysis is currently underway.

Engineers use sophisticated three-dimensional computer modeling that incorporates:

- Building locations
- Equipment specifications
- Distance
- Terrain
- Existing and future structures
- Multiple operating conditions

This modeling predicts sound levels before construction begins and allows the design team to modify equipment or building layouts if necessary to meet applicable local standards.

What happens if there are noise complaints after the facility opens?

Noise concerns would be addressed through the same local processes that apply to other commercial or industrial facilities.

If concerns are raised, they can be reviewed by the appropriate local code enforcement officials.

Will the facility affect livestock?

Available research indicates livestock are generally more sensitive to sudden, unpredictable noises than to steady background sound.

Unlike quarry blasting or crushing operations, data center equipment operates at relatively consistent sound levels that change gradually based on operating conditions and outdoor temperatures.

Will there be backup generators?

Yes. Backup generators are a standard component of nearly every modern data center.

Their purpose is to provide temporary power only if utility service is interrupted, allowing critical digital services to continue operating.

How often will the generators run?

Under normal conditions, backup generators do not operate.

They are used only during utility outages and for limited routine maintenance testing.

Routine testing generally occurs during daytime hours and is carefully scheduled.

Will there be smoke or odors?

Residents should not expect regular smoke or odors from normal operations.

Because backup generators operate infrequently and must comply with strict federal and state emission standards, their use is limited primarily to emergency situations and scheduled maintenance testing.

Will the project affect local air quality?

The data center itself does not produce routine industrial process emissions and will operate within all state and local requirements.

Backup generators are the primary emission source and operate only during emergencies or limited maintenance testing.

Compared to the property's current industrial quarry use, overall emissions from the proposed facility are anticipated to be lower.

Will lighting affect neighboring properties?

Exterior lighting will be designed to provide safety and security while minimizing impacts on surrounding properties.

Lighting plans typically utilize full cut-off fixtures that direct light downward and reduce spillover beyond the property boundaries.

Lighting design must comply with applicable local development standards.

Does Panattoni have any non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) with the Towns of Beloit or Turtle, the City of Beloit, Rock County or any government agency?

No. Panattoni does not have any non-disclosure agreements with the Towns of Beloit or Turtle, the City of Beloit, Rock County or any other government entity related to Project Cornmaze.

Why hasn't the end user been announced?

It is common throughout the technology industry for companies evaluating potential locations to remain confidential during the early stages of site selection. If the project advances to a point where the end user can be publicly identified, that information will be shared when appropriate.

Is the Town paying for infrastructure improvements?

No. Infrastructure required specifically to serve Project Cornmaze including water, wastewater and electrical improvements, would be funded by the developer.

Is the Town paying to review the project?

No. A proposed Cost Reimbursement Agreement would reimburse the Towns for reasonable third-party costs associated with reviewing the project.

These costs may include engineering, legal and consulting services needed to independently evaluate the proposal.

How can residents provide input?

Community participation is an important part of the review process.

Residents can attend public meetings, participate in local hearings, review project information and submit questions throughout the planning process.

How will Panattoni continue communicating with the community?

Panattoni is committed to providing factual, timely information throughout the review process.

As engineering studies are completed and additional information becomes available, updates will continue to be shared through the project website, public meetings and local government proceedings.

The goal is to ensure residents have access to accurate information as the project moves through the planning process.

Where can I learn more or submit a question?

The Project Cornmaze website will continue to serve as the primary source of project information.

Residents are encouraged to check back regularly for updates, review study results as they become available and submit additional questions through the project's public contact channels.

As the project advances, additional information, meeting notices and project updates will continue to be posted to the public.