

# Old Municipal Center Study Group

## FINDINGS REPORT

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## DEFINITIONS

<i>Subject Property</i>	Old Municipal Center Site located at 15153 Nowthen Boulevard, Ramsey, MN. This City owned property is 20.5 acres and contains two contiguous parcels.
<i>OMC</i>	Old Municipal Center
<i>OMC Study Group</i>	Public input group consisting of thirteen (13) Ramsey Residents and three (3) boards/commission members. The purpose of the Study Group is develop and convey detailed public input to the City Council regarding a potential data center development.
<i>Findings Report</i>	Documentation of (A) detailed public input, and (B) detailed analytic information related to the potential development of the <i>Subject Property</i> for a data center user.
<i>Data Center</i>	A data center is a form of warehouse that is used for the storage of computer servers. In other words, a large building containing a vast number of computers. Many people refer to data centers as ‘the cloud.’
<i>EDA</i>	Economic Development Authority
<i>PC</i>	Planning Commission
<i>Comprehensive Plan Amendment</i>	Comprehensive planning is a term used to describe a process that determines a wide variety of community goals and aspirations, in terms of community development. A comprehensive plan is a result of this community process. A Comprehensive Plan Amendment is an update or change to said document.
<i>Zoning Amendment</i>	Zoning is the separation or division of a municipality into districts, the regulation of buildings, structures, their construction and the nature and extent of their land use. The dedication of such districts is designed to protect the health, safety and welfare of the entire community. Zoning is practically enforced via City Zoning Ordinances. A Zoning Amendment is a change to City Zoning Ordinances.
<i>Supplemental Information Packets</i>	Information packet developed by City Staff and sent to <i>OMC Study Group</i> members in advance of a meetings. The purpose of this document is to answer questions and provide factual information to serve as foundation for discussion.

## FORWARD

In November 2013, the City of Ramsey initiated a comprehensive public input process to study a potential data center development located on the City's former municipal center site. The outcome of this process was to specifically identify: "under what circumstances, if any, would a data center development be an acceptable use for the former municipal center site."

As a result of the public input process identified above, this document was created (*Findings Report*). The Ramsey City Council will utilize this *Findings Report* as future land use policy decisions are considered for the *Subject Property*. This *Findings Report* includes both (A) detailed public input, and (B) detailed analytic information.

Public input included in this report was provided by a sixteen (16) member Ramsey resident study group known as the Old Municipal Center (*OMC Study Group*). Analytic information included in this report was managed and developed by City staff with assistance from various professional experts and *OMC Study Group* members.

This *Findings Report* includes general background information on the *Subject Property*; and, background information related to the process utilized by the City, to-date, to consider future development of the *Subject Property*. Additionally, a number of issues/concerns related to a potential data center development were identified, reviewed, and discussed by the *OMC Study Group*. Results include qualitative and quantitative *OMC Study Group* input along with potential mitigation tactics.

## SUBJECT PROPERTY BACKGROUND

### SUBJECT PROPERTY BACKGROUND

The *Subject Property* is located at 15153 Nowthen Boulevard, just south of Alpine Drive. Totalling 20.5 acres, the *Subject Property* encompasses two separate parcels. The *Subject Property* is owned by the City of Ramsey is home to the City’s former municipal center campus.

In June 2012, the Ramsey City Council identified the *Subject Property* as surplus City owned land; as it is no longer needed for current\* or future City functions. Returning tax-exempt City owned property back to the private sector for development benefits the City by increasing the tax capacity base within Ramsey. Increased tax capacity results in less tax burden for individual tax payers.

\*Today, the *Subject Property* is utilized as the temporary home of Ramsey Fire Station #2. The City anticipates constructing a new Fire Station #2, just northeast of the *Subject Property* in the coming years.

The *Subject Property* is currently zoned public/quasi-public. Over the past twenty years, it has been anticipated the *Subject Property* would be developed into a full municipal center campus or a new middle school. The *Subject Property* is not zoned for a residential development; and, the *Subject Property* is not guided for a park by the City’s Parks and Recreation Commission.

## DEVELOPMENT/PROCESS HISTORY

### DATA CENTER OPPORTUNITY IDENTIFIED, Summer 2012

Subsequent to identifying the *Subject Property* as surplus City owned land in 2012, the City was approached by Connexus Energy regarding a potential opportunity to develop the *Subject Property* for a data center user.

Connexus indicated the *Subject Property* was the best data center site in Anoka County for the following reasons: proximity to rail, proximity to river, proximity to major roadway, power capacity, power redundancy, proximity to power substation, redundant fiber, water services, sewer services, proximity to fire services, proximity to police services and size of available land.

### PRELIMINARY CITY REVIEW, Fall 2012

Upon learning of the opportunity presented by Connexus Energy, the City conducted a feasibility study to further analyze the benefit of a potential data center development to the community. Said feasibility report concluded a data center development would result in a substantial tax capacity opportunity for the City of Ramsey. Additionally, in comparison to other business type uses, data centers are abnormally low impact users to surrounding property owners and require a low level of City services. As a result, the Ramsey Economic Development Authority (EDA), Planning Commission (PC) and City Council indicated 'preliminary' interest in pursuing a data center development for the *Subject Property*. In addition to the proposed data center development, all three boards also indicated interest in utilizing the *Subject Property* for a residential development, if a data center development did not come to fruition.

### FIRST ROUND OF PUBLIC INPUT, Spring 2013

With preliminary direction provided by the EDA, PC and City Council to further pursue a potential data center development, attention was then shifted to concentrate on public input and feedback regarding the preliminary proposal.

Before the City moved forward with pursuing a data center development and/or a residential development, the *Subject Property* would need to be rezoned (currently zoned public/quasi-public). Rezoning the *Subject Property* would entail a *Comprehensive Plan Amendment* and a *Zoning Amendment*. According to State Statute, a public hearing is required when a *Zoning Amendment* application is submitted.

In advance of submitting a *Zoning Amendment Application*, and conducting a required public input process, as guided by State Statute, the City decided to proactively pursue public input related to a the future development of the *Subject Property*. The purpose of said additional public input was to make light of any potential issues a data center development would create for surrounding property owners, before an actual data center user stepped forward. The outcome of this proactive public input was to resolve potential land use issues and put the City in position to confidently move forward with pursuing a data center development and/or residential development. Lastly, said proactive measure was intended to provide a future developer with public input information before a standard, State required, public process took place.

In March, 2013 the City notified 250 surrounding property owners of the proposed data center development. Said property owners were invited to attend a public open house in April 2013. Below is a summary of input received:

Public comments were received from open house attendees; as well as non-attendees. In total, the City received twenty-six (26) public comments. Of those, twenty-four (24) opposed a data center development and two (2) were in favor of a data center development.

Staff received an uncertified public petition in opposition of a data center development, and in support of a residential development, from surrounding property owners, on April 26, 2013. Said petition included sixty-nine (69) signatures. Click [here](#) to view.

General public inquiries included, but were not limited to, the use of the *Subject Property* as a school, park, or renovated Fire Station #2; and, inquiries as to whether a data center could be sited elsewhere in the community.

Public comments in opposition of a data center included: concerns with decreased property values, presence and view of data center being undesirable, compatibility with the character of surrounding properties, noise, long term risk/potential re-use of the *Subject Property*, traffic and spot zoning.

For those in favor of a data center development, common public comments included concern with the high traffic impact of a residential development; as well as, concerns that a residential development would reduce the privacy of surrounding property owners (considering low impact and hours of operation for a data center).

General FAQs: See Appendix or [Click Here](#)

Subject Property Reference Map: See Appendix or [Click Here](#)

Development Comparison Chart: See Appendix or [Click Here](#)

## **SECOND ROUND OF PUBLIC INPUT**, Summer 2013

In response to the first round of public input outlined above, the City revised and adjusted data center site concept maps in an attempt to mitigate public concerns. In June 2013, the Ramsey EDA, PC and City Council reviewed said revised data center site concept maps.

In July of 2013 the City Council directed Staff to facilitate a second public input process. The purpose of this second public input process was: *to better understand under what circumstances would a data center development be an acceptable use for the Subject Property.*

The key outcome of this second public input process is a proposal for Council consideration; which will include (1) further documentation/ information addressing specific concerns (2) mitigation proposals addressing specific concerns (3) updated site concept maps. This information was to be used by the City Council before making a final decision to submit a *Comprehensive Plan Amendment and Zoning Amendment* application to allow for a potential data center development.

*For detailed information on the OMC Study Group process, see next section.*

## OMC STUDY GROUP

### **BACKGROUND:**

In July of 2013, the City Council directed Staff to formulate a collaborative public input process consisting of various stakeholders; including: surrounding property owners and at large Ramsey residents. The purpose of the process is to understand under what circumstances a data center development would be an acceptable use for the *Subject Property*.

The outcome of the *OMC Study Group* process is this document (*Findings Report*). The Ramsey City Council will utilize this *Findings Report* as future land use policy decisions are considered for the *Subject Property*. This *Findings Report* includes both (A) detailed public input, and (B) detailed analytic information.

An opportunity to participate in the *OMC Study Group* was advertised via the City's newsletter, direct mail and email. The City received interest from thirteen (13) Ramsey Residents to participate; and, each resident was accepted. In addition to said thirteen (13) residents, the City Council also appointed one (1) board member from the City's EDA, PC and City Council to participate. In total, the *OMC Study Group* consists of sixteen (16) Ramsey residents.

The *OMC Study Group* met five (5) times from November 2013 to March 2014. In summary, *OMC Study Group* first identified a comprehensive list of issues/concerns related to a data center development. Then, subsequent meetings were scheduled to discuss each individual issue/concern. Pervious to each meeting, the City developed and distributed *Supplemental Information Packets*; which, provided detailed analytical information regarding each concern/issue. *Supplemental Information Packets* were used as a foundation to *OMC Study Group* conversations and input; which, included proposed issue mitigation techniques. Concluding this process, the *OMC Study Group* completed an input survey and reviewed this document.

**MEETINGS OVERVIEW:** (see next page)

## MEETINGS OVERVIEW:

### SCOPING MEETING

November 04, 2012

Review *Subject Property* background information and development process history. Outline purpose of *OMC Study Group*. Identify a list of issues/concerns related to a potential data center development. Review commonly asked questions.

### NOISE

December 16, 2012

Noise was raised a major concern by surrounding property owners. The spirit of this potential issue was concentrated on noise pollution backup power generators may create.

### BUILDING DESIGN & SITE LAYOUT

January 13, 2014

The size and look of a potential data center was identified as a concern for surrounding property owners. A massive rectangular shaped, poorly designed, institutional looking building may conflict with the existing character of the surrounding neighborhood.

### SPOT ZONING, TRAFFIC, SAFETY, PROPERTY VALUES

February 03, 2014

All items listed above were raised as concerns for surrounding property owners. Property values dominated the conversation at this meeting. Spot zoning received no conversation.

### INPUT SURVEY AND FINDINGS REPORT

March 24, 2014

*OMC Study Group* members participated in an input survey and reviewed this *Findings Report* at their final meeting.

## FINDINGS REPORT

### **BREAKDOWN:**

The *Findings Report* is broken down as follows:

#### **MITIGATION SUMMARY**

Overview of mitigation techniques discussed by the *OMC Study Group*.

#### **GENERAL SURVEY RESULTS**

Results of survey covering general questions, not issue specific questions.

#### **ISSUE BY ISSUE RESULTS**

Included in the *Findings Report* is detailed breakdown of information shared and input received for each specific issue identified by the *OMC Study Group* (Noise, Site Layout, Building Design, Spot Zoning, Safety, Traffic, Land Values). Each issue is broken down into the following categories:

- i. Summarized description of issue
- ii. Analytic information
- iii. Potential mitigation techniques identified by the *OMC Study Group*
- iv. Qualitative *OMC Study Group* input/feedback
- v. Quantitative *OMC Study Group* input/feedback.
- vi. Appendix of this *Findings Report* is raw information utilized in each *OMC Study Group* meeting; and supplemental information submitted by *OMC Study Group* members.

**FINDINGS REPORT: MITIGATION SUMMARY**

**MITIGATION SUMMARY**

In summary, Staff would propose rezoning the *Subject Property* to R1-Residential (click [here](#) for City Code). If the City Council decided to pursue a data center development, Staff would propose also using an ‘Overlay District\*’ on the *Subject Property*. An Overlay District would be placed on-top of (or, in addition to) the proposed R1-Residential zoning district.

Said Overlay District would allow use of the *Subject Property* for a data user via a Conditional Use Permit\*\* (CUP). Specific mitigation proposals identified by the *OMC Study Group* would be identified in the Performance Standards\*\*\* section in City Zoning Ordinances.

**ZONING DEFINITIONS**

**\*Overlay District Defined**  
 An overlay district is a land use tool that allows for a unique zoning district to be placed over an existing zoning district. An overlay district calls out unique zoning standards, or permitted/conditional uses, in addition to the existing zoning district.

**\*\*Conditional Use Permit**  
 Each zoning district described in the City’s zoning code includes a list of permitted and conditional uses. In summary, permitted uses are legal uses of property that do not require approval by the City Council; however, administrative review and approval is required. Conditional uses require City review and approval via Conditional Use Permit (CUP). A CUP allows a City to attach reasonable conditions to the approval of a particular use; which, ensure compatibility with surrounding properties and protection of the health, safety and welfare of the community.

**\*\*\*Performance Standards**  
 Specific rules, standards and regulations tied to a particular use. For example, a data center use may require a set of specific standards to be met. Performance standards are enforced across the entire City, rather than a particular zoning district.

STAFF NOTE: if the *Subject Property* was guided for a data center development, it would not carry ‘Industrial Zoning’ as currently utilized in the City’s business parks. The *Subject Property* would be zoned for ‘Residential’ with an ‘Overlay District.’ The overlay district would specifically call out a data center use only.

*Mitigation Summary continued on next page*

**MITIGATION SUMMARY, Continued:**

Detailed mitigation techniques are outlined in each 'issue' specific section of this *Findings Report*. This section is intended to provide an overview.

**NOISE**

- A strong mitigation process exists today. This process is framed by minimum regulations put in place by the State of Minnesota.
- In order to provide an extra layer protection and further address noise concerns raised by residents, City staff would propose making data centers a "Conditional Use" in City zoning ordinances.
- Use of generators on nights and weekends would be prohibited by the City.
- Use of sound attenuation enclosures for generators would be required by the City.

**SITE LAYOUT/BUILDING DESIGN**

- A minimum 300' setback from data center building to adjacent residential dwellings would be required.

NOTE: Due to the odd shape of the *Subject Property*, and the varying situation of surrounding parcels, this results in standard building setback measurements ranging from 175' to 250'.

- Requirement of an articulated building façade.
- Maximum building height no greater than surrounding residential structures.
- Requirement of an articulated site layout.
- Both site layout and building design should include a residential feel.
- Two smaller buildings preferred, versus one large building (site concept #3).

**SPOT ZONING**

- *OMC Study Group* members chose to not discuss this item. No comments or feedback was received.

**SAFETY**

- Storm water ponds located on the *Subject Property* should be designed not to hold standing water.
- Additional, non-required, environmental review should be considered.

**TRAFFIC**

- If the *Subject Property* is developed for a data center user, keep access to Nowthen Boulevard to avoid safety and congestion issues on existing residential roads.
- If the site is developed for residential, provide the public an opportunity to discuss traffic impacts; and, identify mitigation techniques.

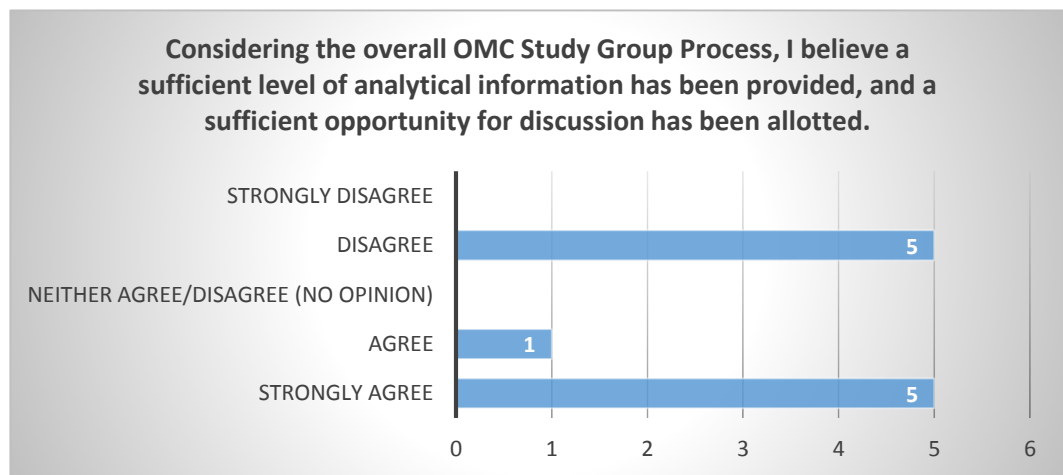
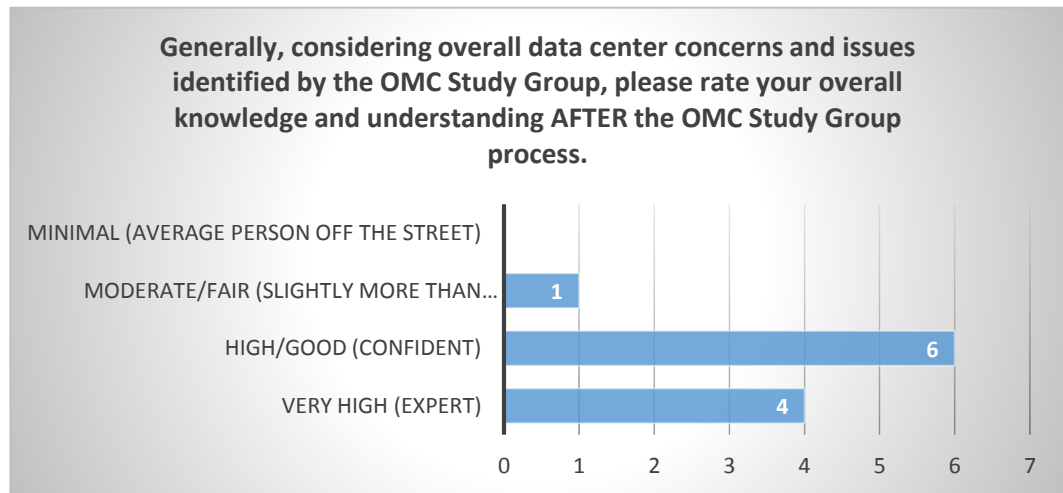
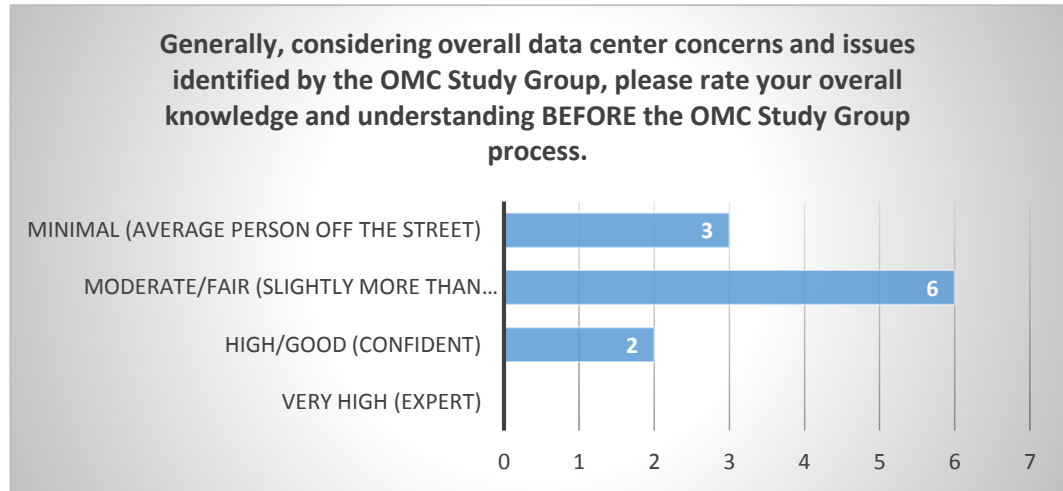
**LAND VALUES**

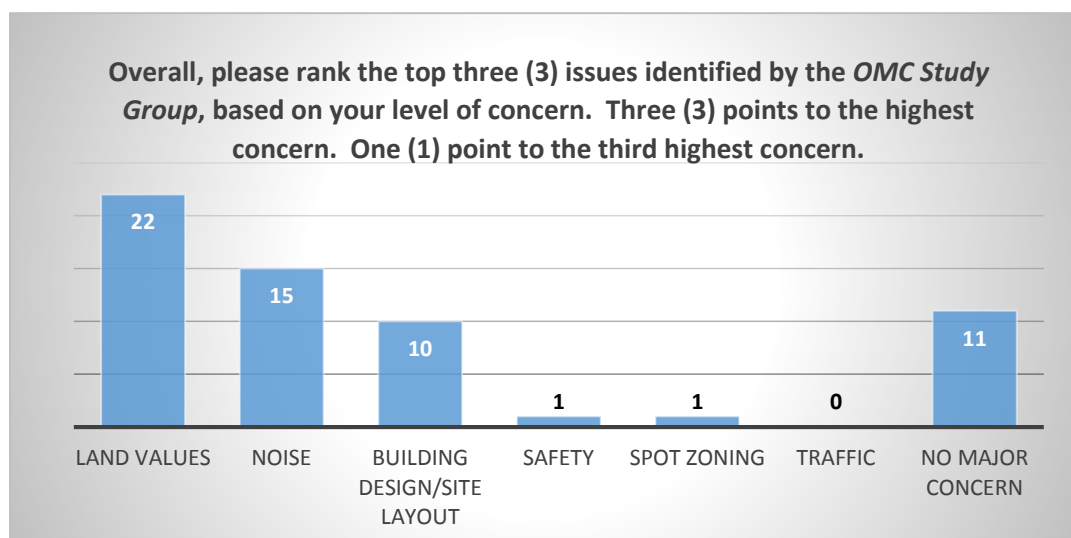
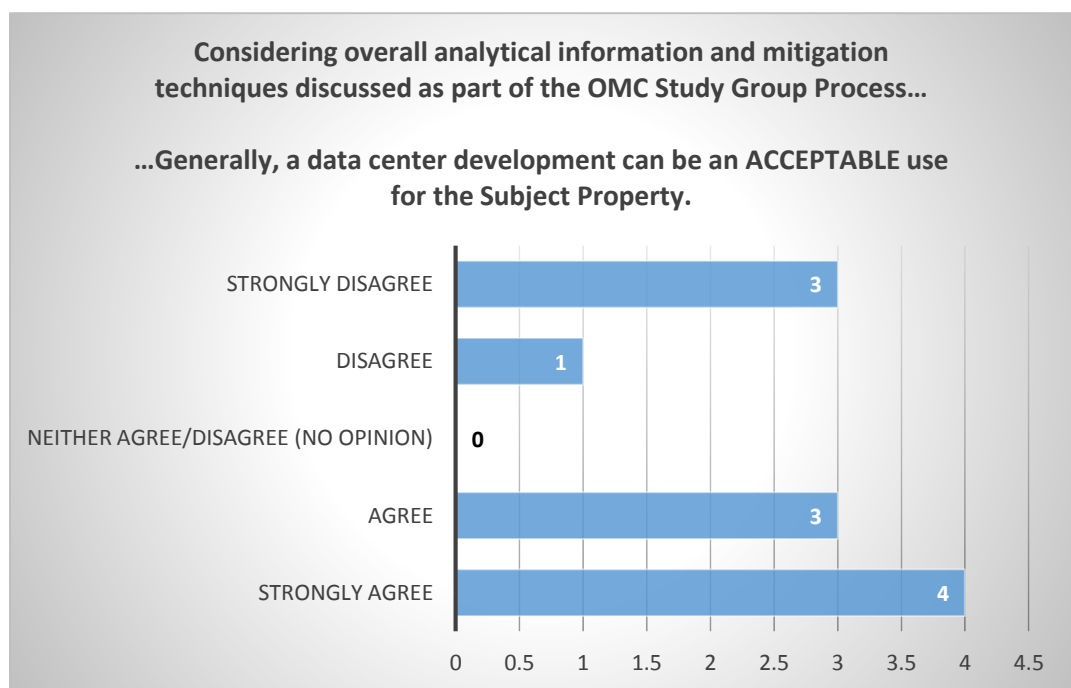
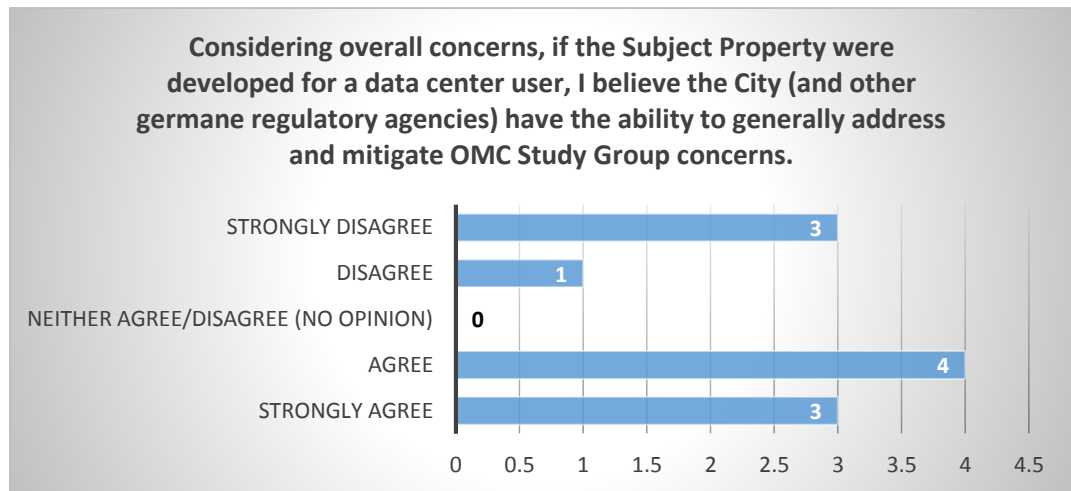
- An overall quality development including proper implementation of mitigation techniques as outlined above will protect property values.

## FINDINGS REPORT: GENERAL SURVEY RESULTS

### General Survey Results (final meeting survey, quantitative)

Listed below are results from a survey/poll conducted at the final *OMC Study Group* meeting. Eleven (11) of the possible thirteen (13) *OMC Study Group* members eligible to vote participated.





**FINDINGS REPORT: NOISE**

**ISSUE DESCRIPTION**

A number of residents have identified noise pollution a major issue resulting from a potential data center development. Specifically, data centers utilize backup power generators and a large quantity of air conditioning units. Both backup generators and air conditioning units can create noise pollution. *OMC Study Group* discussion, questions and comments were focused on backup power generators alone. Residents were very concerned with backup generator noise pollution taking place on nights and weekends; and, excessive backup power generator noise pollution at any point, on any day. Concern also exists that backup generator use on nights and weekends would disrupt residents’ ability to sleep and enjoy the use of their back yards.

**ANALYTICS** (click [here](#) for supplemental information)

The City of Ramsey is bound by the same noise pollution standards as any other City in Minnesota. Noise pollution standards are set and regulated by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). Local units of government are statutorily prohibited from setting maximum noise limits more stringent than those set by the MPCA.

The MPCA determines noise pollution based on the type property being effected; not, based on the type property producing noise. Therefore, regardless what user *Subject Property* contained in terms of development use, noise pollution rights of surrounding residential property owners remains the same. The MPCA determines maximum noise pollution standards for a variety of different property types. In the case of the *Subject Property*, we are only concerned with residential noise pollution standards.

MPCA resources are available to assist Ramsey in determining compliance with MPCA noise pollution standards. The MPCA does have noise monitoring equipment/training available to local governments, and are also available for review of proposed projects.

Within a residential area (NAC 1), MPCA noise standards are listed below. Noise is measured by the MPCA in dB(A); which, is a unit of sound expressed in decibels (dB) and A-weighted (A); which, is a weighting of sound pressure levels for the purpose of determining the human response to sound:

	<u>6 Minutes (10% of hour)</u>	<u>30 Minutes (50% of hour)</u>
DAYTIME:	L10, 65dB(A)	L50, 60dB(A)
NIGHTTIME:	L10, 55dB(A)	L50, 50 dB(A)

NOTE: Generators run for more than six minutes, therefore, in the case of a data center development, the City would utilized the more stringent regulations, L50. For more MPCA information, click [here](#).

Information was provided to the *OMC Study Group* related to other cities’, developers’ and data centers’ experiences with noise pollution concerns from nearby/adjacent residential properties. In summary, either noise was not a concern others’ experienced; or, noise concerns raised by residents were mitigated.

Lastly, information was provided by *OMC Study Group* members related to noise as well; which, included noise decibel reading scales and several noise pollution related articles. All information provided by the City and the *OMC Study Group* is included in the *Findings Report* Appendix (click here [#1 #2 #3 #4-14 #15](#)).

### MEETING NOTES

*OMC Study Group* members were able to utilize MPCA noise decibel reading equipment at the meeting; and, a second opportunity to utilize MPCA equipment was provided at a subsequent meeting. A data center employee volunteered to come to this meeting and answer noise related questions. Lastly, a City Staff member, experienced with land use regulations and code enforcement was also available at this meeting to provide insight and answer *OMC Study Group* questions, related to land use regulations.

A number of questions were asked at this meeting. Follow up answers were provided via email, and are included in the *Findings Report* Appendix (click [here](#) to view).

### MITIGATION TECHNIQUES

A strong process for regulation and enforcement of City ordinances exists today. If the *Subject Property* was developed as a data center, the City would lean back on existing code enforcement processes to correct potential noise violations.

With that in mind, in order to provide an extra layer protection and further address noise concerns raised by residents, City staff would propose making data centers a “Conditional Use” in City zoning ordinances--rather than simply making a data center a “Permitted Use.” In this scenario, a data center user would be required to apply for, and attain, a “Conditional Use Permit” (CUP) from the City in order to operate.

#### **Granting a CUP provides two extra layers of protection to residents:**

- A. Allows the City to add reasonable land use conditions specific to the property to prevent potential negative impacts on surrounding property owners *before* a development moves forward (site plan review process).
- B. Provides the City with strong/clear legal case to require a property owner violating City zoning ordinances to come back into compliance. Why? City may revoke (terminate) CUP--if City imposed ‘conditions’ outlined in said CUP are violated.

#### **The following restrictions would be proposed:**

- A. Backup generators may not be run during the night, any day of the week, 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m., unless for emergency purposes only.
- B. Backup generators may not be run during the weekend, Saturday and Sunday, anytime, unless for emergency purposes only.
- C. Required use of sound attenuation enclosures for generators.

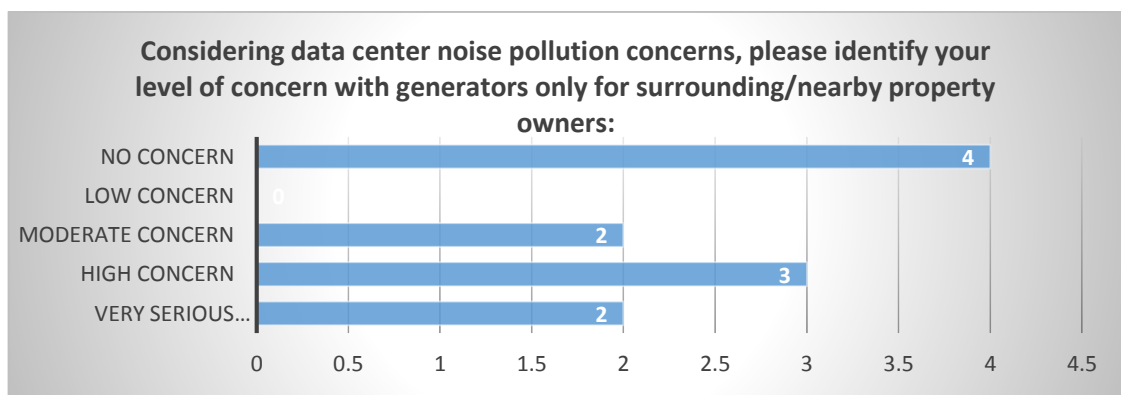
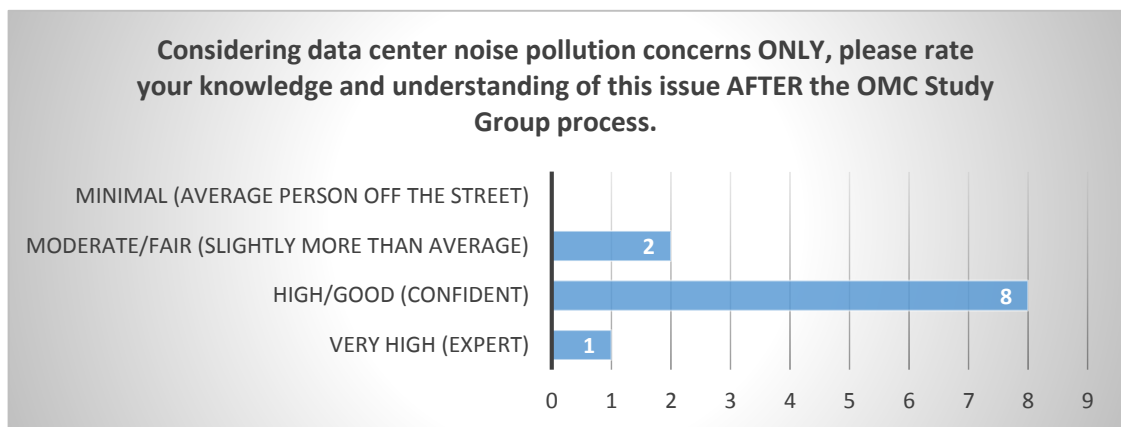
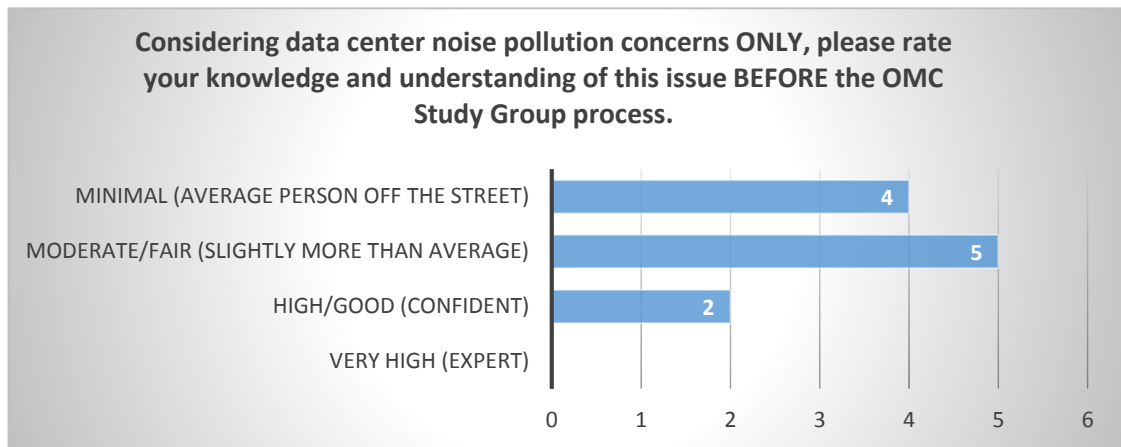
Lastly, it should be noted, additional sound mitigation techniques are included in the building design and site layout section of this document.

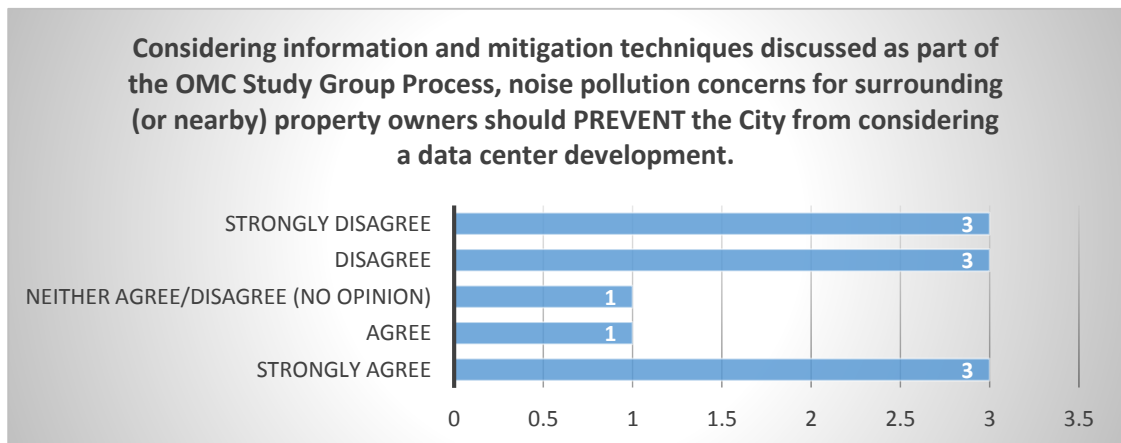
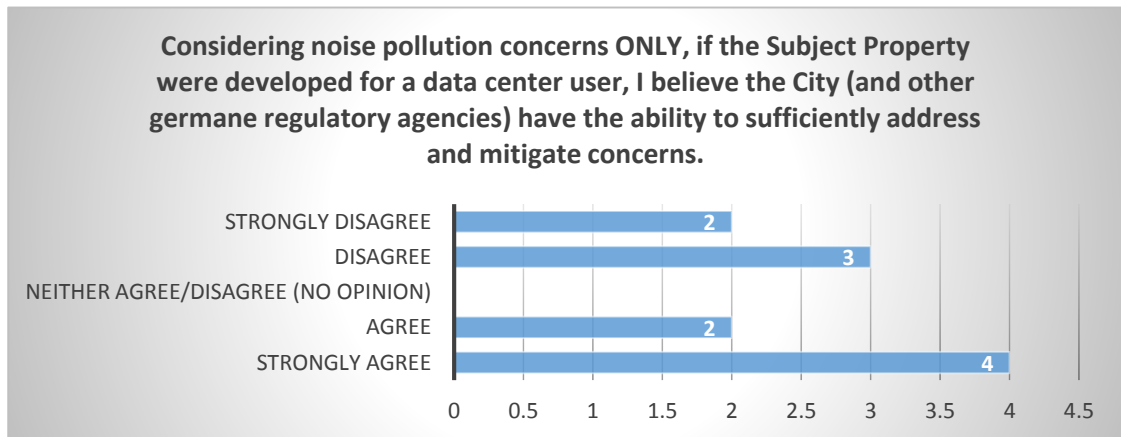
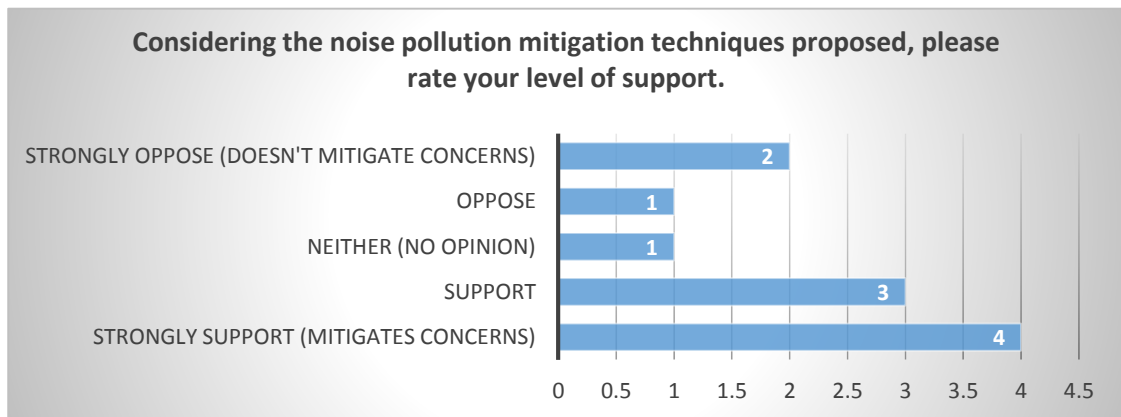
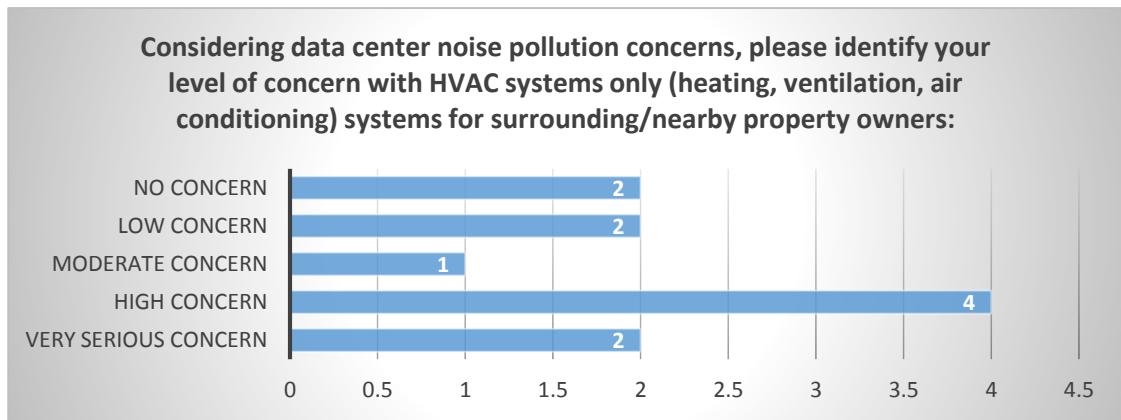
**INPUT/FEEDBACK** (at meeting)

In summary, potential noise pollution from generators dominated this conversation. A strong desire exists for strict, proactive, City regulation and enforcement of noise pollution standards, in the event a data center was placed on the *Subject Property*. Lastly, proper/ quality design of a data center is very important in relation to noise pollution concerns (setbacks, screening, transitioning, building height, etc.).

**INPUT/FEEDBACK**

Listed below are results from a survey/poll conducted at the final *OMC Study Group* meeting. Eleven (11) of the possible thirteen (13) *OMC Study Group* members eligible to vote participated.





## FINDINGS REPORT: BUILDING DESIGN & SITE LAYOUT

### ISSUE DESCRIPTION

A number of *OMC Study Group* members raised concerns related to the size, look and layout of a potential data center development. Specifically, residents have concerns a data center development will result in a massive institutional looking/ designed building; and, would disrupt the character of the surrounding neighborhood; and, would be a visual impediment to surrounding property owners.

### ANALYTICS ([click here for supplemental information #1 #2 #3 #4](#))

Concerns described above are generally broken down in two separate, but closely related, components: building design and site layout.

- (1) BUILDING DESIGN—how a data center would look from the street. For example, architecture, type of building materials, height of building, etc.
- (2) SITE LAYOUT—how a data center would look from a bird’s eye view. For example, footprint of building, building setbacks, parking lot size, parking lot setbacks, road access location, etc.

The City provided the *OMC Study Group* with the following information in preparation of this meeting:

- (1) EXAMPLE BUILDING DESIGNS—how other existing data centers and existing business type facilities look and have been constructed.
- (2) EXAMPLE SITE LAYOUTS—existing, comparable, data centers site layouts.
- (3) SUBJECT PROPERTY CONCEPTS—a look at proposed data center site layout concepts for the *Subject Property*.
- (4) TESTIMONIALS—other communities and organizations’ experiences with site layout and design of data centers (cities, data centers and developers). In summary, when compared to other communities with similar scenarios, Ramsey’s proposed site layout is similar (revised version).

To review the above information and resources in detail, please reference the *Findings Report Appendix*.

### MEETING NOTES

This meeting was less academic and analytically based than all other *OMC Study Group* meetings and much more qualitative and visually/spatially based. This meeting included both a visual preference survey (building design) and a site layout exercise (site concept maps).

A number of questions were asked at this meeting. Follow up answers were provided via email, and are included in the *Findings Report Appendix* ([click here](#) to view).

### MITIGATION TECHNIQUES

In summary, the following general guiding principles were developed by the *OMC Study Group* for the design and site layout of a potential data center development:

(1) ARTICULATED BUILDING FAÇADE

Any proposed structure should include variations, architecture, physical breaks, textured finish and quality design visible from ground level. The look of a building should not be industrial, ultra-modern, institutional, or include massing of windows or metal. Mechanical units should be screened with walls looking similar or identical to the primary building. The maximum height of any proposed building should not be greater than the height of nearby single family homes, from ground level; including mechanical units.

(2) AN ARTICULATED BUILDING LAYOUT

Any proposed structure should contain variations or breaks in the perimeter. The proposed building should not be single massive rectangular shaped building with a simple, smooth, edge. The proposed structure should enclose and or physically shield mechanical units from surrounding properties. Any proposed site layout should minimize light pollution and traffic impacts on surrounding property owners. Screening efforts should be emphasized both on the perimeter of the property and adjacent to proposed structure. Building, parking lot and mechanical room setbacks should be the same or similar.

(3) RESIDENTIAL FEEL

Complementing surrounding residential structures, from both a building design and site layout perspective, is critical to the *OMC Study Group*.

If the City decides to pursue a data center development, Staff would propose the above components be woven into City Zoning Code as performance standards for a data center development, which would be allowed via a Conditional Use Permit (CUP).

Included in the Appendix are update site concept maps (click [here](#) to view); which, were developed based on comments an input from the *OMC Study Group*.

SITE CONCEPT NOTES

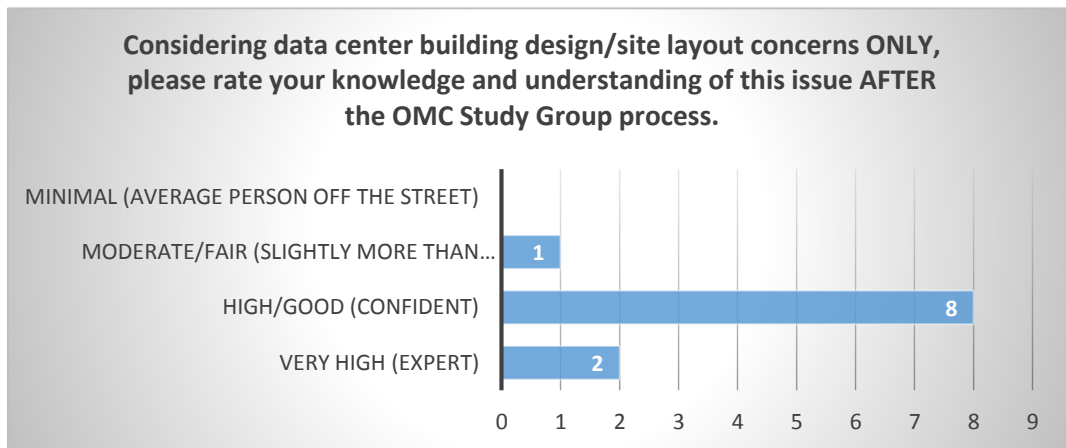
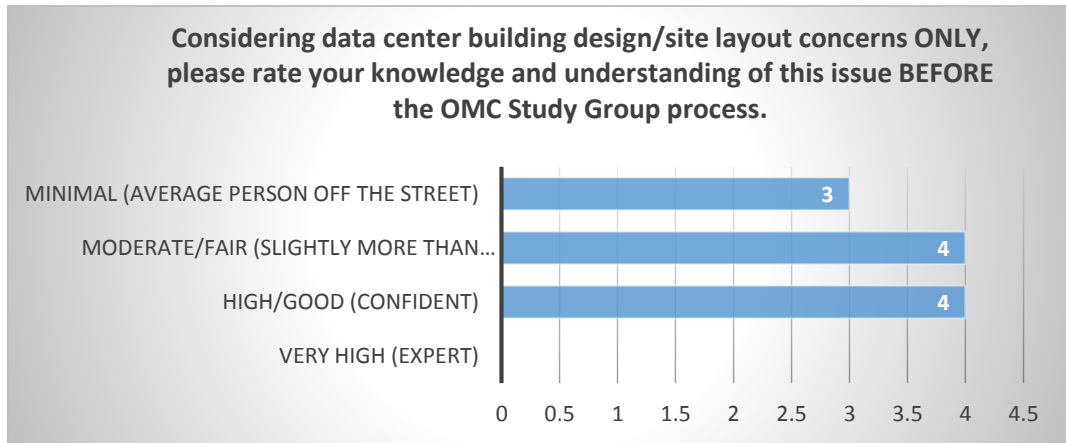
- *Subject Property* is oddly shaped. Surrounding properties have different household setbacks (lot sizes). Therefore, a range of building setbacks were utilized for the *Subject Property* (from 175' to 250'). In effort to be equitable, Staff made it a priority to achieve an actual 290-300' setback from a potential data center structure to adjacent residential structures (versus only using adjacent property lot lines).
- As requested by the *OMC Study Group*, potential site concepts discussed in meeting three, were checked for market relevance. As a result, a couple 'brain storming' maps were not included in the revised site concepts.
- Both minor architectural, and large wall, breaks were added to building perimeters.
- Properties located on the north east corner of the *Subject Property* are uniquely exposed to future development; due to short setbacks and lack of natural transitioning (i.e. road, trees, etc.). If the *Subject Property* is development for a data center user, increased residential transitioning techniques should be considered in this area of the *Subject Property*.

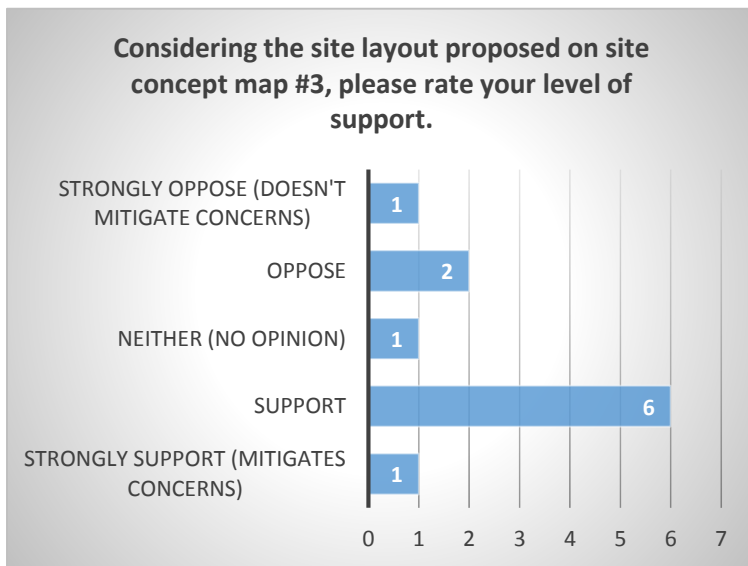
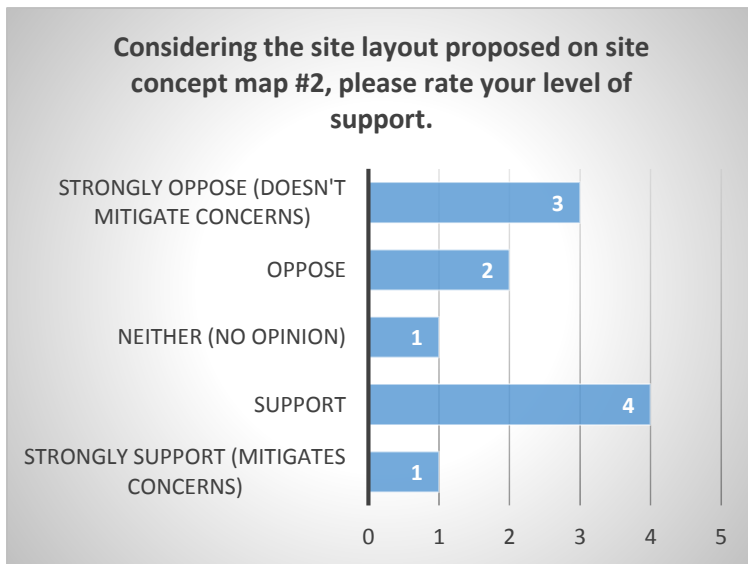
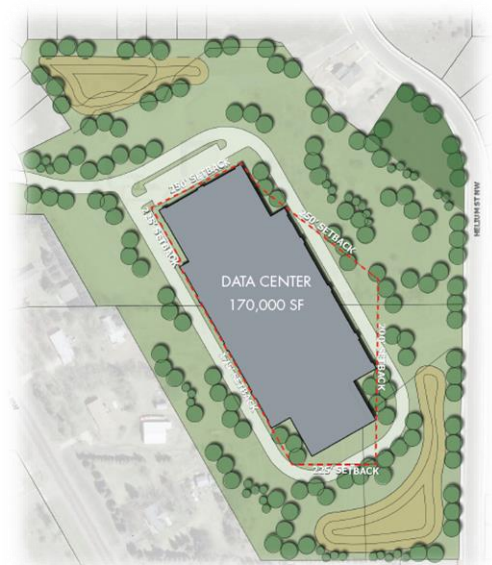
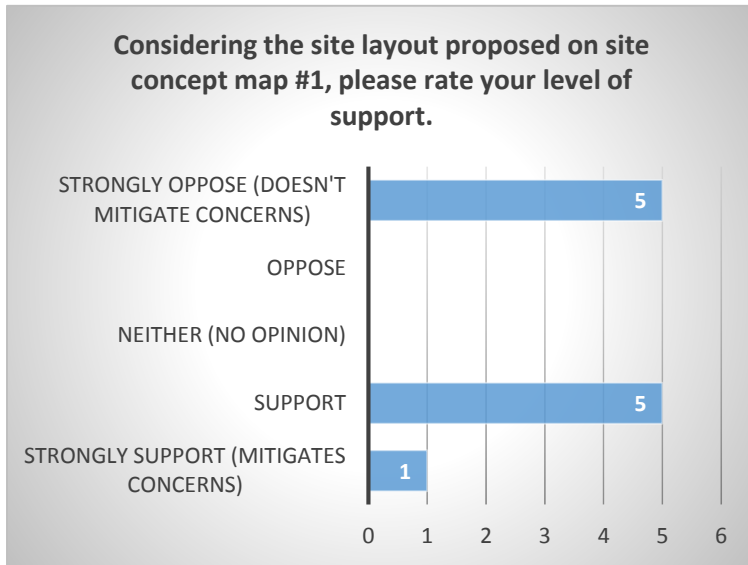
**INPUT/FEEDBACK** (at meeting, qualitative)

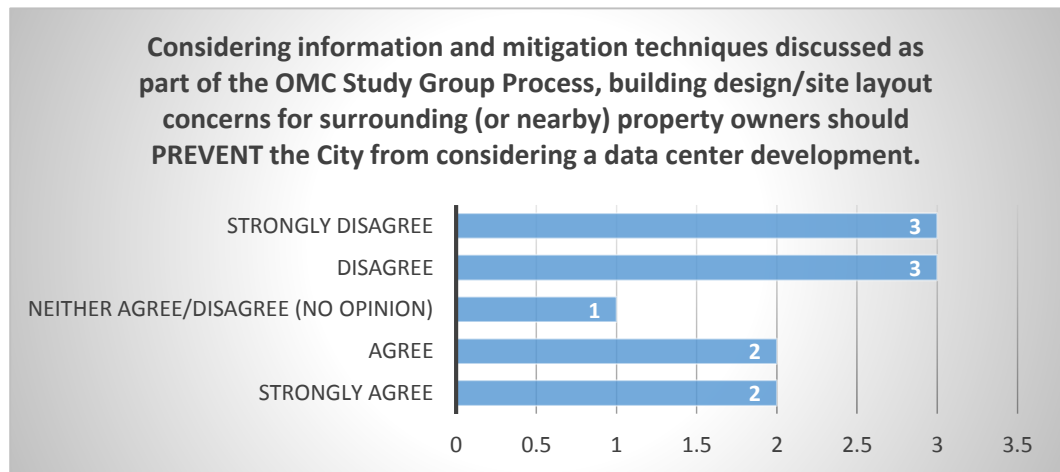
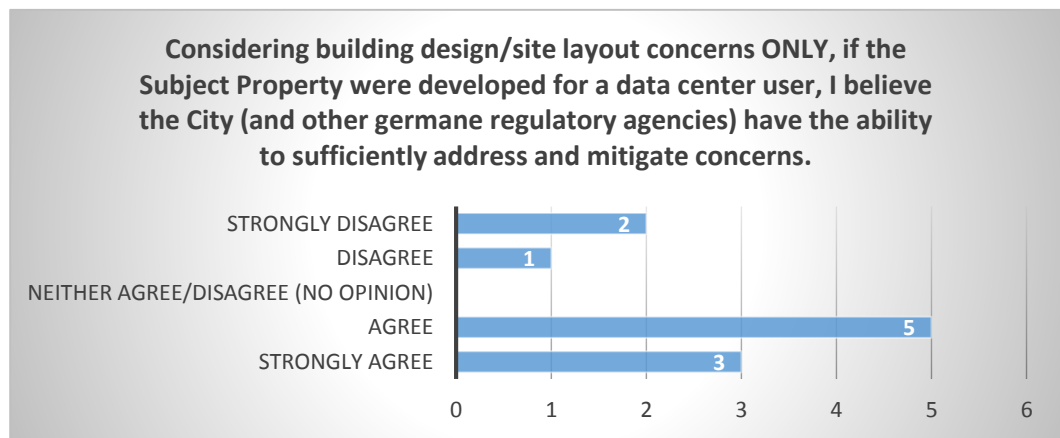
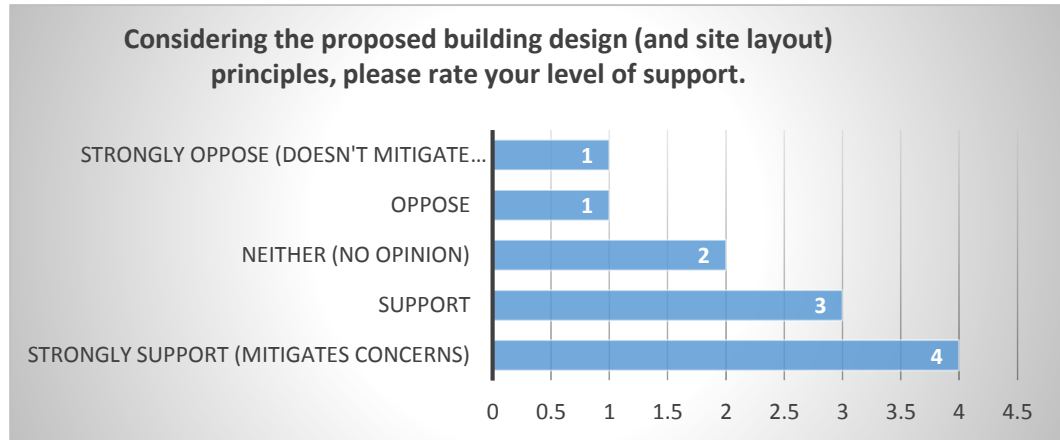
Input and feedback is summarized and reflected in the above section.

**INPUT/FEEDBACK** (final meeting survey, quantitative)

Listed below are results from a survey/poll conducted at the final *OMC Study Group* meeting. Eleven (11) of the possible thirteen (13) *OMC Study Group* members eligible to vote participated.







**FINDINGS REPORT: TRAFFIC**

**ISSUE DESCRIPTION**

Several *OMC Study Group* members identified traffic resulting from a data center development a major issue. Specifically, increased traffic would congest existing roadways and would decrease safety.

**ANALYTICS** (click [here](#) for supplemental information, page 7)

This concern was reviewed with the City’s engineering department, planning department, various data center users and various cities experienced with data centers. Below is a list of summarized comments.

- Data centers require an abnormally low quantity of employees—in comparison to the size of a data center facility; and, in comparison to other business users. A single data center typically ranges from 12-24 total employees.
- If developed for a data center, the City would require access to the *Subject Property* from Nowthen Boulevard. A data center would not utilize existing residential roads for access to the *Subject Property*.
- After construction, data centers will generate minor truck traffic during weekday business hours (similar level of UPS/FedEx deliveries a residential neighborhood would generate).
- Cities experienced with data centers being located adjacent to residential areas have not reported any complaints related to traffic (Chaska, Elk River, Anoka).
- Based on the City Engineer’s estimations, a data center development would have significantly lower traffic impacts on surrounding properties than would a residential development. See below.

<u>Estimations:</u>	<u>Data Center Development</u>	<u>Residential Development</u>
Weekday	48-96 vehicle trips per day 4*per employee (12-24)	470 vehicle trips per day 10*per household (47)
Weekend	8-16 vehicle trips per day 4*per employee (2-4)	470 vehicle trips per day 10*per household (47)
Access	Nowthen Boulevard	Helium Street (Potentially Nowthen Boulevard) Significant traffic increase on 152 Ave NW
Road Type	Private	Public

*Source, Traffic Estimations: Institute for Transportation Engineers (ITE), Trip Generation Manual.*

- **STAFF NOTE:** In general, for safety reasons, Anoka County is interested in eliminating access points from Nowthen Boulevard, which includes access to the *Subject Property*. If the *Subject Property* was developed for a data center, the City would be an advocate for keeping access to the *Subject Property* from Nowthen Boulevard. Based off initial discussions with Anoka County and the City Attorney, the City is confident access to Nowthen Boulevard will remain.

**MEETING NOTES**

This issue was not discussed at length; comments and questions were minimal, in comparison to other issues outlined in this *Findings Report*. The majority of discussion was centered on a potential residential development, not the proposed data center development.

A number of questions were asked at this meeting. Follow up answers were provided via email, and are included in the *Findings Report Appendix* (click [here](#) to view, page 11).

**MITIGATION TECHNIQUES**

If the *Subject Property* is developed for a data center user, keep access to Nowthen Boulevard to avoid safety and congestion issues on existing residential roads. If the site is developed for residential, provide the public an opportunity to discuss traffic impacts; and, identify mitigation techniques.

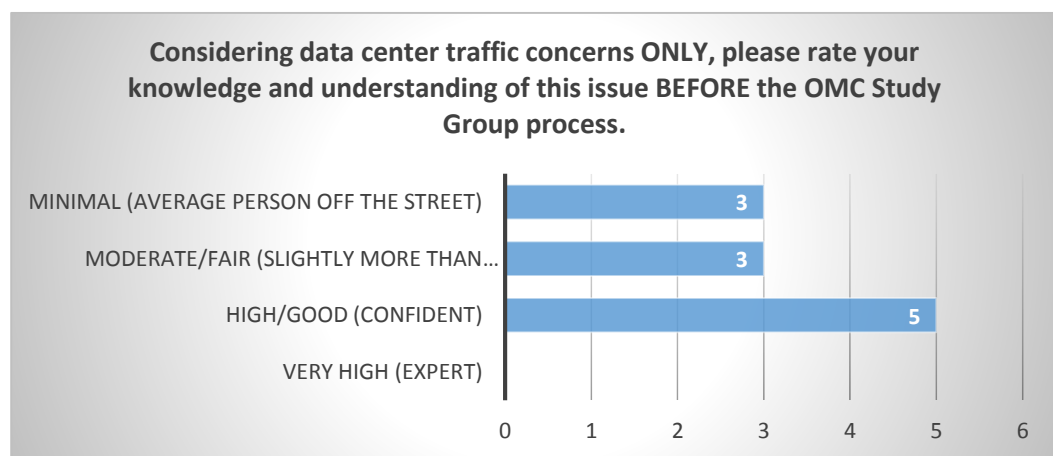
**INPUT/FEEDBACK** (at meeting)

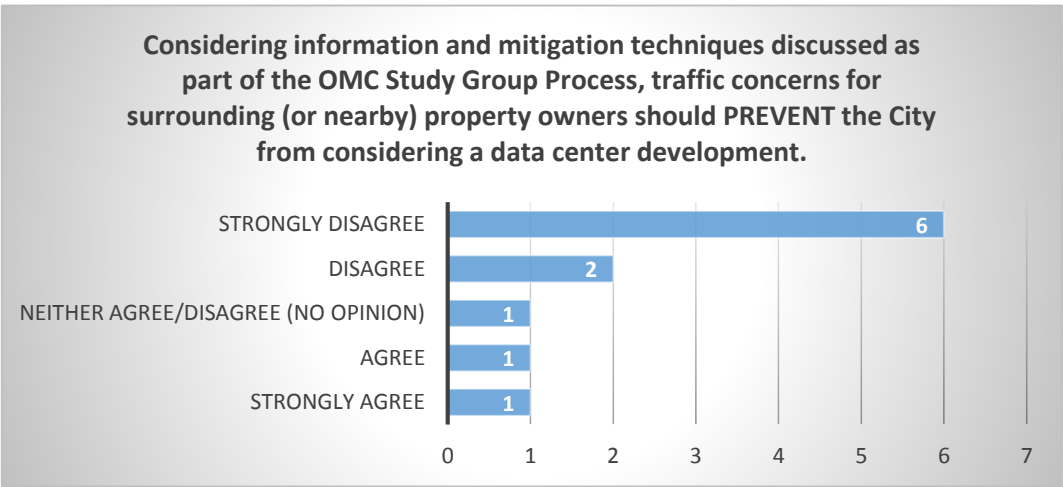
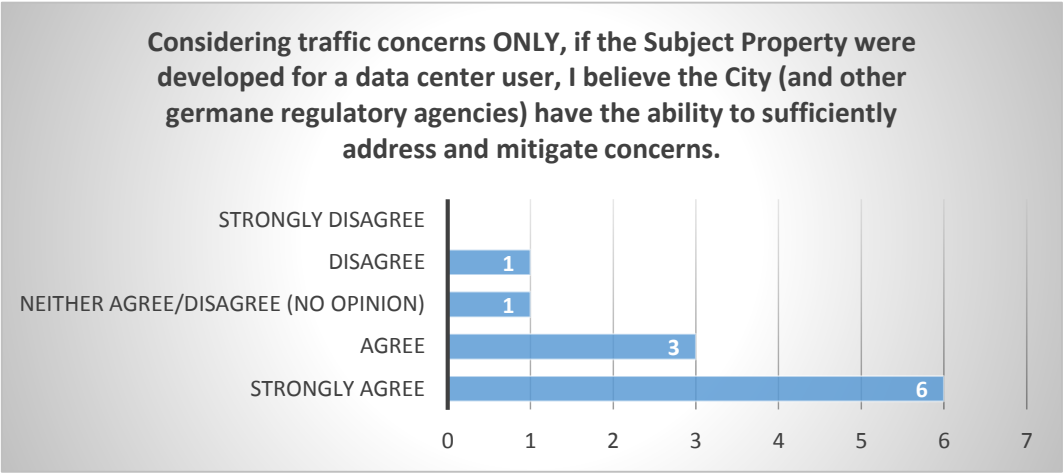
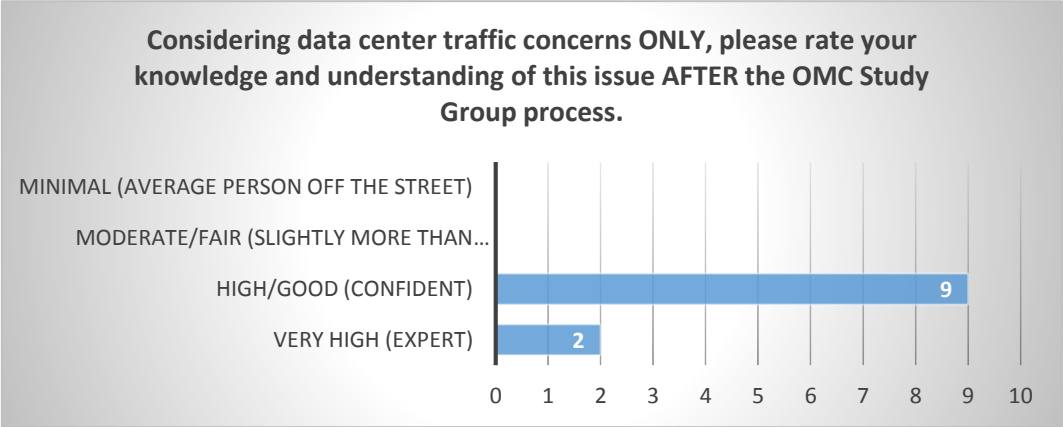
Generally, given the proposed access location and Engineer’s traffic estimations, traffic was not a major topic of discussion for the *OMC Study Group*. A couple *OMC Study Group* members remain concerned traffic generated by a data center traffic will be an issue for surrounding property owners.

One *OMC Study Group* member is very concerned the *Subject Property* may be developed for a residential neighborhood. In which case, traffic would become a major issue on 152<sup>nd</sup> Avenue between the *Subject Property* to Trunk Highway 47. If the *Subject Property* is developed as residential neighborhood, it has been requested the City allow the public an opportunity to discuss traffic concerns further.

**INPUT/FEEDBACK** (final meeting survey, quantitative)

Listed below are results from a survey/poll conducted at the final *OMC Study Group* meeting. Eleven (11) of the possible thirteen (13) *OMC Study Group* members eligible to vote participated.





## FINDINGS REPORT: SAFETY

### ISSUE DESCRIPTION

A number of *OMC Study Group* members made both specific and general comments related to how a data center could make the *Subject Property*, and the surrounding neighborhood, unsafe for children and pedestrians. Specifically, the *OMC Study Group* has the following concerns: elimination of existing open space will force kids to play on roadways, electromagnetic fields and stray voltage resulting from a data center would be hazardous to nearby residents, large and open water stormwater ponds are hazardous for kids, barbed wire and razor fencing are hazardous for kids, and general environmental impact concerns exist.

### ANALYTICS (click [here](#) for supplemental information, page 9)

Listed below are responses from City staff, and relative professional experts, to safety concerns raised by the *OMC Study Group*.

#### (1) GENERAL CITY COMMENTS RELATED TO SAFETY CONCERNS

Generally, the purpose of Ramsey's land use regulations is to protect the health, safety and welfare of the entire community. With that in mind, the City utilizes a number of approaches to ensure any development on *Subject Property* will be safe (land use regulations, development review process, building code, maintenance enforcement, law enforcement, etc.). If a data center were constructed on the *Subject Property*, the City would work within the framework/sprit identified above.

Generally, a data center development is one of the lowest impact 'business' type uses known in the market. Data centers yield low traffic, low employment, low noise pollution, low light pollution and high quality buildings. Additionally, data centers 'want/desire' to remain as low 'profile/hidden' as possible from surrounding properties.

Keeping in mind the City would pay close attention to any safety impacts a potential data center development would have on surrounding properties, it is the City's understanding, a data center will not create significant safety hazards.

#### (2) ELIMINATION OF EXISTING OPEN SPACE WILL FORCE KIDS TO PLAY IN ROADWAYS

If the *Subject Property* was developed for a data center user, Staff would recommend the City Council consider dedicating a portion of the *Subject Property* for public open space.

#### (3) HAZARDOUS ELECTRIC MAGNETIC FIELD (EMF) AND STRAY VOLTAGE

Staff discussed this item with Connexus Energy. In summary, based on input from Connexus Energy, if a data center were placed on the *Subject Property*, there would be no health or safety concerns regarding EMFs or stray voltage. For more detailed comments from Connexus Energy on both items, please reference below.

##### ***Electric Magnetic Fields***

Connexus Energy stated a power line required for a data center would not be of significant/abnormal size. A power line running to the *Subject Property* would have no different EMF than businesses located in the City's business parks, retail areas or The COR. A power line running to the *Subject Property* would be placed in road right of way

(ROW). Furthermore, a common concern from residents regarding EMF from power lines is the potential for a mild 'humming' noise. Because any power line run to the *Subject Property* would be placed under ground, and would be of insignificant size, zero noise pollution would occur.

#### ***Stray Voltage***

Proper wiring and grounding of electrical equipment is the best way to avoid stray voltage. Stray voltage is very rare. When it occurs, it is typically the result of very old, overhead infrastructure, located near large metal structures (metal farm buildings, farm equipment and large metal fences); which, are not prevalent in Ramsey.

In the case of the *Subject Property*, all external wiring would be located underground. Additionally, the State of Minnesota Electrical Code will be utilized; which, is in place to avoid said issues. This item was reviewed by Connexus Energy and this item was not identified as a concern. Stray voltage does not occur when utilizing modern underground infrastructure and modern building codes.

#### (4) STORM WATER PONDING (STANDING WATER), DANGEROUS FOR CHILDREN

Today, a large stormwater pond is located on the south east corner of the *Subject Property*. Said stormwater pond is beyond adequate size to serve the entire *Subject Property* at full development. A data center development located on the *Subject Property* will not create demand for additional stormwater ponding. If fact, it is probable the existing stormwater pond will be reduced in size or reconfigured by a future developer.

Soils located in Ramsey, and specifically on this the *Subject Property*, are comprised with a significant level of sand; which, allows for fast infiltration of stormwater into soils. Considering the *Subject Property* specifically, standing stormwater has not been an issue in the past. Additionally, a reliever stormwater pipe was recently connected to the *Subject Property*; which, further mitigates said concern.

With the above information in mind, the City has historically never received complaints or concerns regarding safety due to the existing stormwater pond. Therefore, because the proposed data center would result in a similar or smaller sized stormwater pond, the City would anticipate the absence of safety issues to remain.

#### (5) BARBED WIRE/RAZER WIRE FENCE

The City is not aware of a data center surrounded by barbed or razor wire fencing in Minnesota. The City is not aware of any data center in Minnesota that includes perimeter fencing, of any type. The City does not require fencing around traditional stormwater ponding; and, historically has never had related public safety issues.

#### (6) SIGNIFICANT TRAFFIC

Please see traffic section for details.

#### (7) ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

A number of environmental concerns are addressed through the City's existing regulatory practices. In this particular situation, the City has conducted an abnormal amount of pro-active/additional environmental research to prepare for future

development of the *Subject Property*. The purpose of said additional research was to improve the competitiveness of this site in the larger marketplace. Examples below:

- Conducting Phase I & II Environmental Assessments (EA), Limited Site Investigation (LI), and a Response Action Plan (RAP)
- Conducting Pre Building Demolition Hazardous Material Survey, and an Hazardous Materials Abatement Plan
- Wetland Delineation Survey
- Geotechnical Soils testing

Standard Review Process includes the following:

- Stormwater management program review.
- Site plan review process  
(several land use/zoning standards related to environmental concerns enforced)
- Building plan review process  
(several State building codes related to environmental concerns enforced)

For a more in-depth environmental review, the City would rely on the State of Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB). This level of review includes either an EIS (Environmental Impact Statement) or EAW (Environmental Assessment Worksheet); and, would require an actual development proposal.

**Who decides if an EQB review is needed?**

Responsibility of making case-by-case decisions on the need for EISs and EAWs and for determining if an EIS or EAW is mandatory lies with local governments and State agencies. For almost any project, the rules identify the governmental unit which has this responsibility. The EQB provides assistance to governmental units in interpreting the rules and carrying out their responsibilities, but the EQB is not involved in decisions, except in specific, limited circumstances.

**The EQB has the following ‘minimum’ thresholds for requiring a review on the *Subject Property* specifically.**

- Residential: 250 single family homes, 375 multiple family units
- Data Center: 500 employees or 450,000 square feet of building
- NOTE: cumulative effects do not exist in this scenario, as defined by the EQB

For more information on the EQB, please see the appendix or [click here](#).

Another environmental review option the City may be interested in considering is an Alternative Urban Area wide Review (AUAR). For more information please see the Appendix or [click here](#).

**MEETING NOTES**

Safety was not discussed at length; comments and questions were minimal, in comparison to other issues outlined in this *Findings Report*. Stormwater ponds received most discussion, followed by general environmental concerns.

A number of questions were asked at this meeting. Follow up answers were provided via email, and are included in the *Findings Report* Appendix (click [here](#) for a hyperlink, page 15).

**MITIGATION TECHNIQUES**

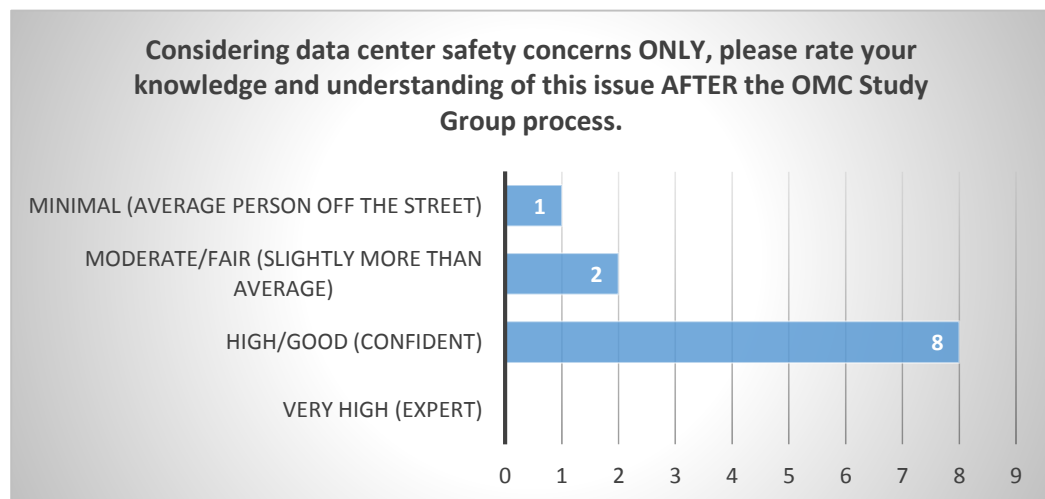
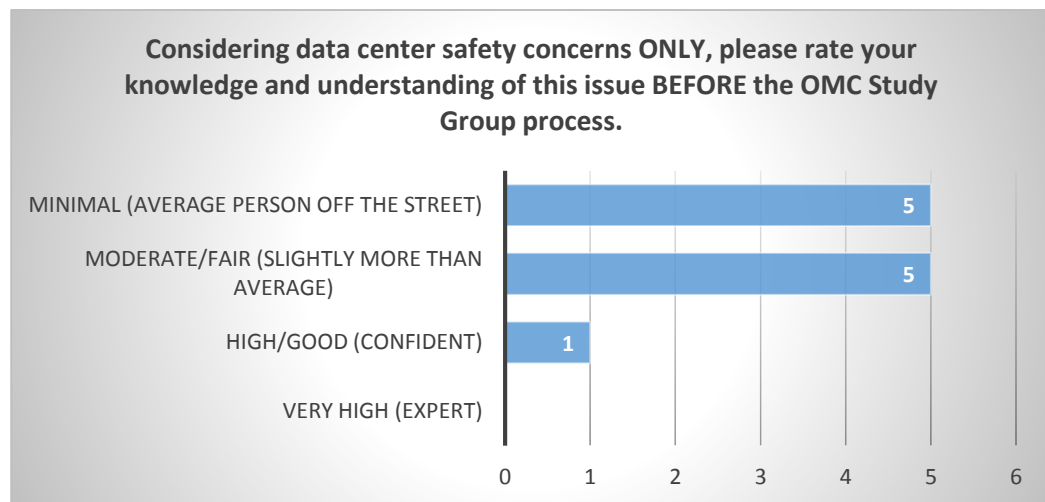
Storm water ponds located on the *Subject Property* should be designed not to hold standing water. Additional environmental review should be considered.

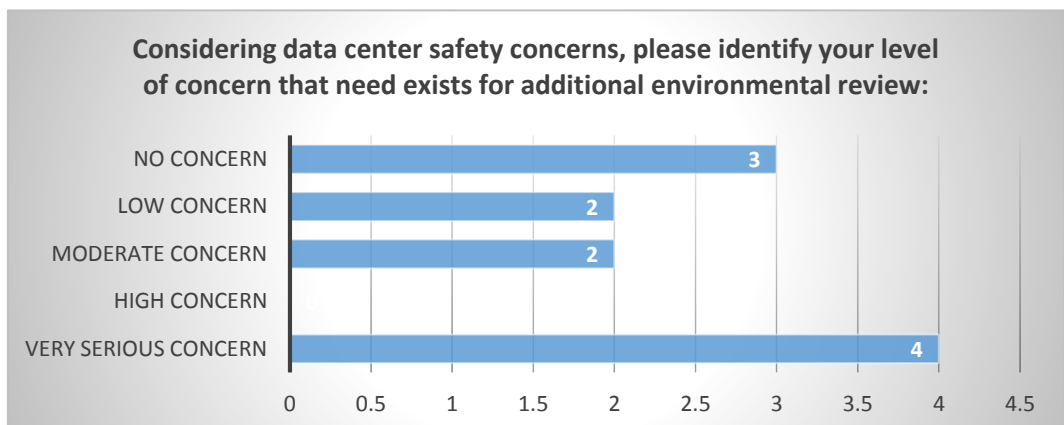
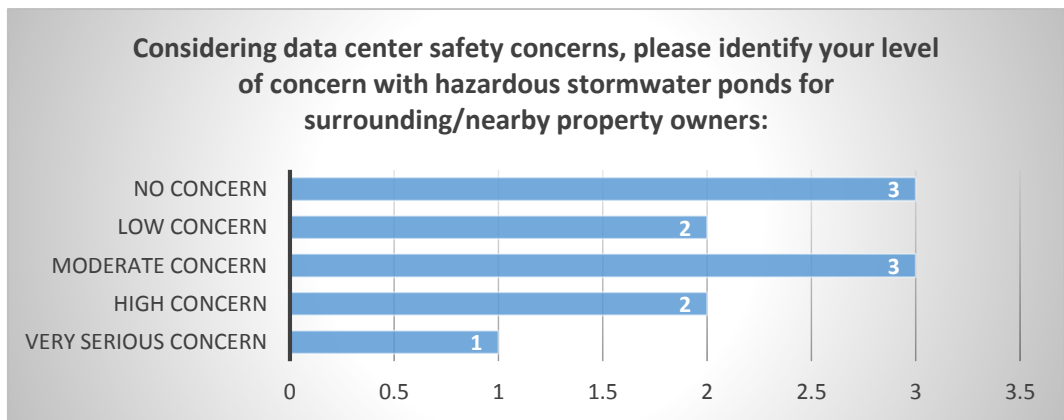
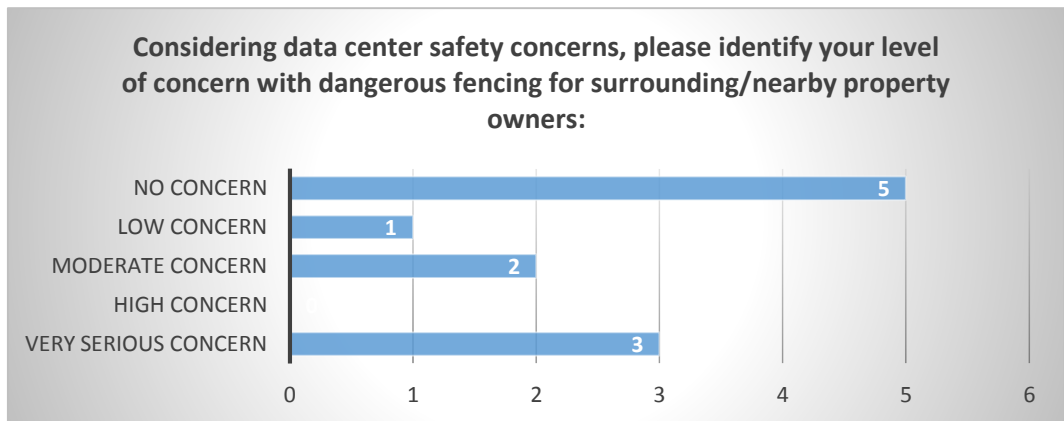
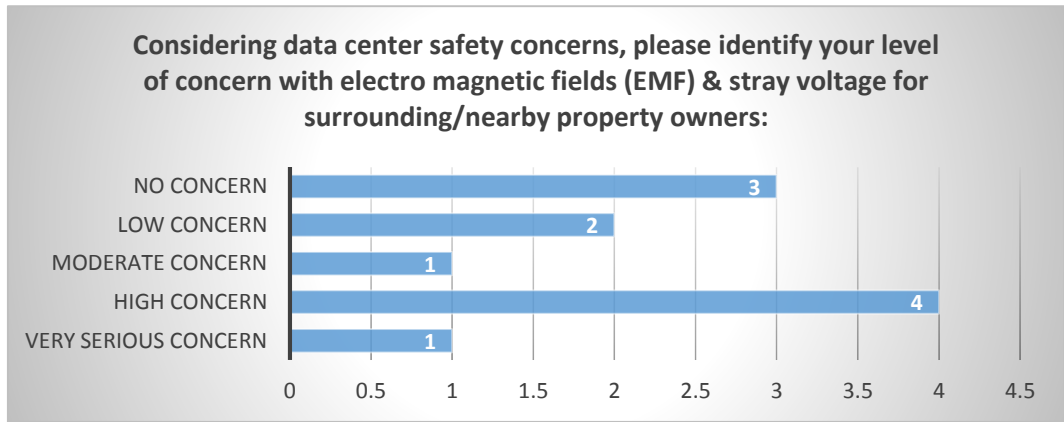
**INPUT/FEEDBACK** (at meeting)

Concern remains for a couple *OMC Study Group* members related to standing water in stormwater ponds and the need for additional environmental review by the City.

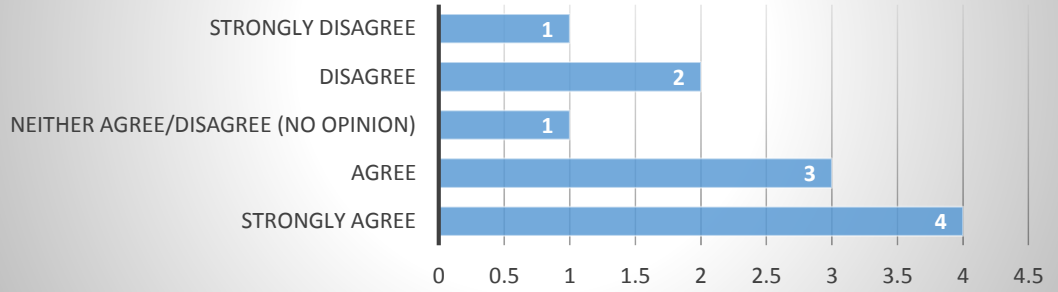
**INPUT/FEEDBACK** (final meeting survey, quantitative)

Listed below are results from a survey/poll conducted at the final *OMC Study Group* meeting. Eleven (11) of the possible thirteen (13) *OMC Study Group* members eligible to vote participated.

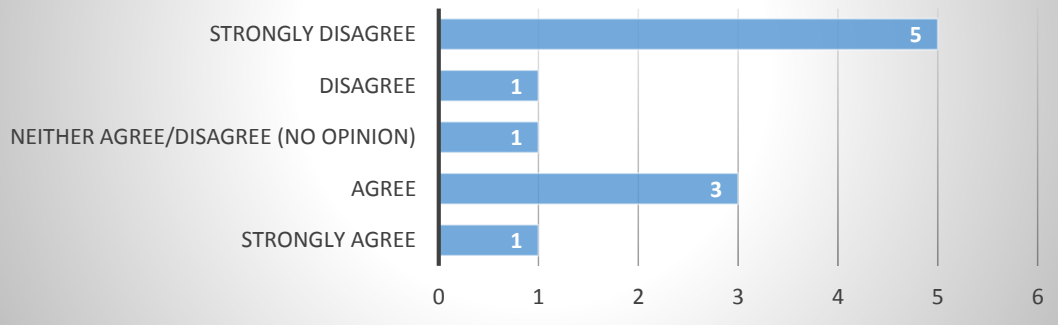




**Considering safety concerns ONLY, if the Subject Property were developed for a data center user, I believe the City (and other germane regulatory agencies) have the ability to sufficiently address and mitigate concerns.**



**Considering information and mitigation techniques discussed as part of the OMC Study Group Process, safety concerns for surrounding (or nearby) property owners should PREVENT the City from considering a data center development.**



## FINDINGS REPORT: SPOT ZONING

### ISSUE DESCRIPTION

A number of *OMC Study Group* members indicated by the City allowing a data center user to utilize the *Subject Property*, the City would be in legal violation of Spot Zoning.

NOTE: this topic was discussed heavily by members of the public before the *OMC Study Group* process.

### ANALYTICS (click [here](#) for supplemental information, page 3)

City staff had a chance to review a potential data center development, located on the *Subject Property*, with the League of Minnesota Cities (LMC), the City's Planning & Zoning Division, the City Attorney and a number of metro cities experienced with data centers developments located adjacent to residential areas. Considering the following factors, City staff does not believe the proposed data center development is a violation of spot zoning:

1. Large size of the *Subject Property*, 20.5 acres.  
(spot zoning is concerned with small parcels)
2. City is developing the *Subject Property* for a rational use and a public purpose  
(fire station funding, economic development, removal of tax exempt property, removal of substandard buildings, low impact user proposed)
3. Previous/guided use was either a middle school or municipal center complex  
(both conceivably higher impact users than a data center)
4. City would enforce strict land use regulations to ensure a data center use would transition/be compatible with surrounding properties.  
(compatible site layout, compatible building design, mitigation of traffic and noise concerns, use of CUP, etc.)
5. City would pass a *Comprehensive Plan Amendment* before moving forward with a *Zoning Amendment*.

SPOT ZONING DEFINED: Rezoning of a small lot or parcel of land to benefit an owner for a use incompatible with surrounding land uses that does not further the Comprehensive Plan. Allowing for a use in a residential area that has *excessive* noise, glare and traffic would be a concern. Staff has the following comments related to the definition of spot zoning.

#### (1) NOISE

State imposed noise pollution regulations exist for all Minnesota cities. Specific standards exist for residential areas. The *Subject Property* would be regulated by the State (MPCA) identically to any other use located adjacent to a residential area (including single family residential). Lastly, the City is considering requirement of various additional noise mitigation measures to avoid any potential noise issues from a data center (hours of operation for generators, proper screening, CUP, etc.).

#### (2) GLARE

In summary, all exterior lighting for a data center will require review and approval by the City (staff, Planning Commission and City Council approval). The review and approval process is based on a required 'photo metrics' plan (lighting plan included in a formal site plan review process). Because surrounding

properties are residential, no light bulbs emitting 150 watts or greater will be allowed to ‘freely’ shine to adjoining properties. Said 150+ watt light bulbs will need to be aimed away from residential properties and towards the ground. See City Ordinances, Zoning Code, Section 117-117, Paragraph E2, for details.

**(3) TRAFFIC**

A data center would produce significantly less traffic than any previous or proposed use of the *Subject Property* (residential, municipal center campus, middle school, etc.). Traffic resulting from a proposed data center would only take place on internal, private, roads. Road access to the *Subject Property* would come from County State Aid Highway (CSAH 5), not existing residential roadways.

STAFF NOTES: “spot zoning” is not addressed in State Statute; it is a part of case law and planning literature only. The *Findings Report* Appendix includes legal information and case law regarding spot zoning; and, additional information related to zoning in Minnesota (click [here](#) for hyperlink).

**MEETING NOTES**

OMC Study Group members chose to not discuss this item at the meeting. No comments or feedback was received.

**MITIGATION TECHNIQUES**

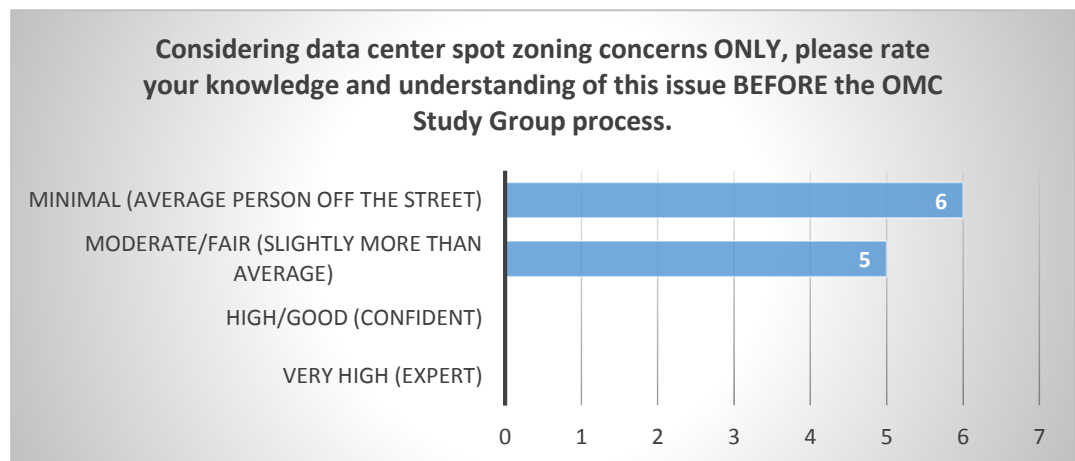
OMC Study Group members chose to not discuss this item at the meeting. No comments or feedback was received.

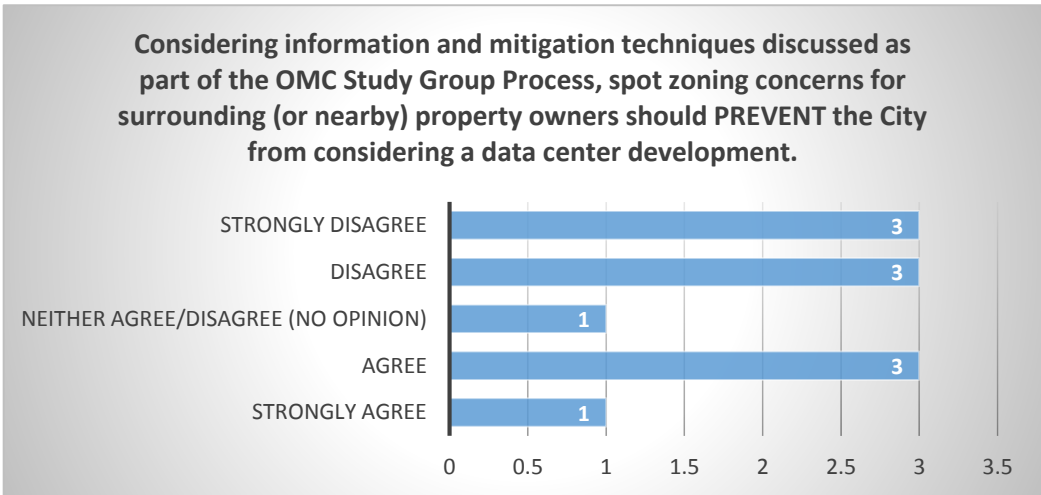
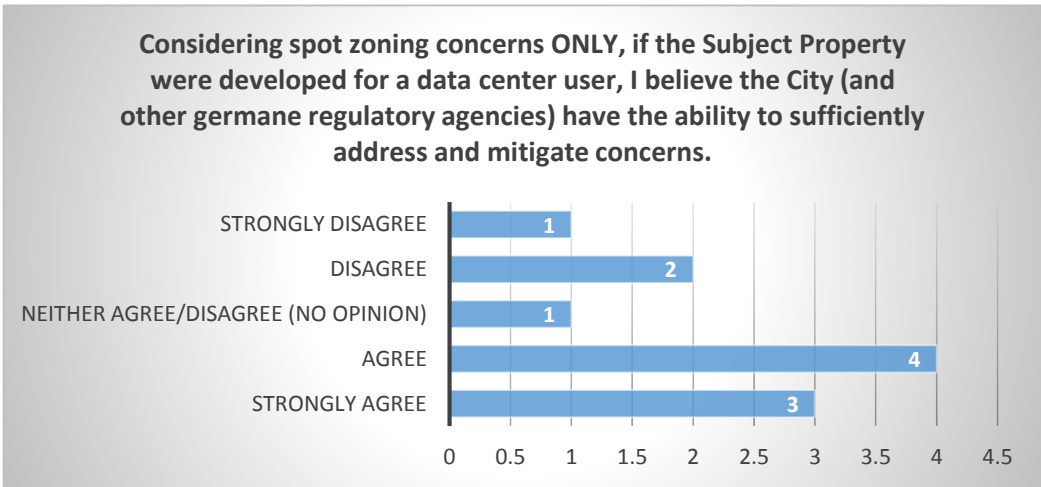
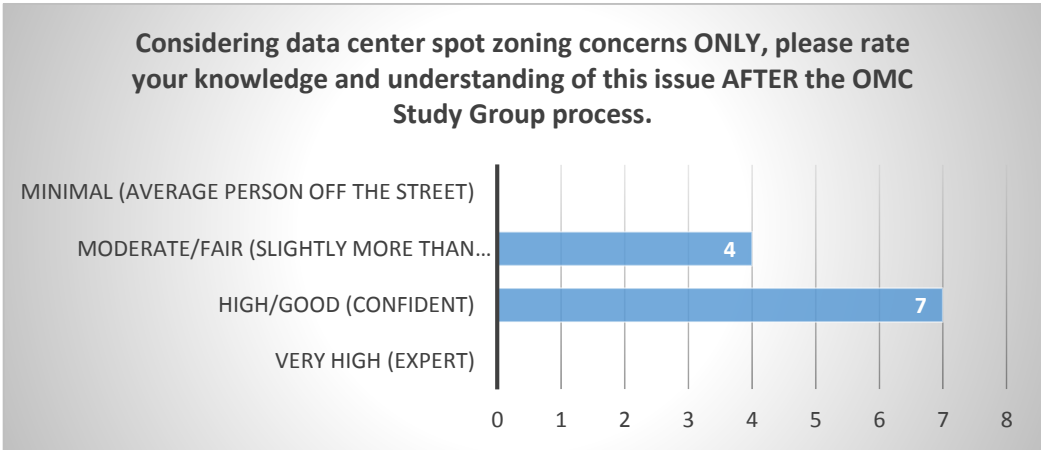
**INPUT/FEEDBACK** (at meeting)

OMC Study Group members chose to not discuss this item at the meeting. No comments or feedback was received.

**INPUT/FEEDBACK** (final meeting survey, quantitative)

Listed below are results from a survey/poll conducted at the final *OMC Study Group* meeting. Eleven (11) of the possible thirteen (13) *OMC Study Group* members eligible to vote participated.





## FINDINGS REPORT: LAND VALUES

### ISSUE DESCRIPTION

A portion of *OMC Study Group* members indicated development of the *Subject Property* for a data center user will result in decreased property values for surrounding property owners. In many cases, a 10-15% minimum reduction in property values was specified by *OMC Study Group* members (based on personal conversations with realtors).

In conjunction to this discussion, a pending lawsuit in Ohio relating to a CitiGroup data center was identified as an example of why the City should not be considering a center development on the *Subject Property*.

### ANALYTICS [\(click here for supplemental information, page 5\)](#)

City staff had a chance to review this concern with the City Attorney (Ratwik, Rosak & Maloney P.A.) a Residential Appraiser (anonymous), a Commercial Broker (anonymous), the City's real estate broker (CBRE) the Anoka County Assessor and the League of Minnesota Cities (LMC). Below is a list of summarized comments.

- A. This accusation is very subjective and very challenging to quantify. A large number of variables effect the value of property; and, they change over time; and, they change based on perspective. Brokers/experts the City contacted were unable to make a 'firm' quantified opinion related to this acquisition.
- B. A substantial quantity of case law exists related to this accusation. In general, Courts have consistently ruled against Cities that have made land use regulation decisions based solely on this accusation. Most case law indicates this accusation is subjective, unclear and lacks legal basis. This accusation likely cannot legally stand alone—there must be a cause of action (for example, spot zoning).
- C. Understanding what base comparison surrounding property owners are utilizing to determine perceived changes in value is important. Examples of valuation comparisons are listed below with general comments.

#### COMPARING "X" USE OF SUBJECT PROPERTY TO "Y" FUTURE USE

In this case, the future use of the *Subject Property* is a potential data center development. A difference in opinion exists between City Staff and several *OMC Study Group* members on what the base use/existing comparison of *Subject Property* value should be (i.e. the "X" use).

##### X.1 Large Open Space/Minor City Use

*Subject Property* was not guided for a large public open space or a park. Based on information the City has available, this is an insufficient and irrelevant comparison

##### X.2 Single Family Residential

*Subject Property* was not guided for said use. Based on information the City has available, this comparison subjective, arbitrary and not most relevant. This specific base comparison has been commonly utilized by residents; and in many cases, is a major reason residents believe a reduction in surrounding property values will occur.

### X.3 Municipal Campus/Middle School

*Subject Property* was guided for said use. This comparison is subjective and arbitrary. Based on information the City has available, this comparison is most relevant and applicable to this specific situation. This base comparison has been utilized by City Staff to draw conclusions and provide information to the OMC Study Group.

- D. A data center is a lower impact use than either guided uses for the *Subject Property* (municipal center campus or middle school). Data centers yield significantly less traffic, significantly less employment, quality buildings and less noise than either guided uses. In general, based on City Staff research, data centers ‘want/desire’ to remain as low profile/hidden as possible from surrounding properties. For the reasons stated, City Staff believes it would be very challenging to support an accusation claiming a data center would have a negative effect on surrounding properties values—in comparison to the guided uses (municipal center campus or middle school).
- E. A number of *OMC Study Group* members indicated they worked with real estate agents and real estate appraisers whom indicated construction of data center on the *Subject Property* will result in a minimum 10-15% decrease in surrounding residential property values. City Staff did request for an opportunity to follow up with real estate agents and appraisers whom *OMC Study Group* members received professional opinions. An opportunity to communicate with said appraisers and real estate agents was not realized. A concern Staff retains is what base comparison said real estate agents utilized to determine a loss in property values (i.e. see section C above).
- F. In an effort to mitigate this concern, Staff would emphasize the importance of quality land use regulations (including proper transitioning standards) and quality building design if the *Subject Property* were to be developed for a data center. Staff recommends the City update their comprehensive plan to reflect desired zoning before moving forward with either development scenario (residential or data center).

NOTE: Previous to 2006, the City participated a one-to-one land swap/exchange of publicly zoned property (on the north side of the *Subject Property*) for residential zoned property (on the south side of the *Subject Property*). The result was no net increase or decrease of public or residential property.

### G. REVIEW OF PENDING LAWSUIT AGAINST CITI GROUP (DATA CENTER) IN OHIO

NOTE: the City was provided with a copy of the lawsuit and disposition from Case No. 2:12-CV-856, United States District Court, Southern Ohio, Eastern Division.

The City did take some time to review said lawsuit and disposition. Based on City Staff’s interpretation, the Plaintiff has the following major claims (issues/arguments) against the Citi Group data center in Ohio constructed in 2007:

1. Regular use of generators on weekends
2. Regular use generators at night time, all days (between 10pm and 7am)
3. Refuse of Defendant to install or design generators that would avoid creation of loud noise
4. Refuse of Defendant to shift generator operations to normal working/business hours
5. As a result of the above issues not addressed by City Group (i.e. noise), the Plaintiff has claimed a decrease in property value and would like to seek compensation.

City Staff believes this is a good case study for the *OMC Study Group*. In this particular situation, it appears evident little/no conscious effort was exhausted by the City (Township in this case) to work with surrounding property owners—to identify, address and avoid potential issues from a data center.

It is City Staff's opinion, similar concerns raised in this specific example (Citi Group Data Center) have also been raised with the *OMC Study Group* regarding a potential Ramsey data center. The *OMC Study Group* has discussed a number of mitigation tactics to eliminate said concerns. Examples below:

1. Regular use of generators on weekends  
*OMC Study Group* proposed prohibiting use of generators on weekends for testing or other regular uses. Only emergency use would be allowed. This would be enforced via a Conditional Use Permit (CUP).
2. Regular of generators at night time, all weekdays, between 10pm and 7am  
*OMC Study Group* has proposed prohibiting use of generators from 6pm-8am for testing or other regular uses. Only emergency use would be allowed. This would be enforced via a Conditional Use Permit (CUP).
3. Refuse of Defendant to install or design generators to avoid creation of loud noise  
*OMC Study Group* proposed sound attenuation enclosures for generators, requirement of mechanical rooms to be physically enclosed, required screening of mechanical rooms, required residential transitioning standards and an emphasis to comply with MPCA noise standards for residential areas—not business areas. This would be enforced via a Conditional Use Permit (CUP); and, the City's existing code enforcement process.
4. Refuse of Defendant to shift generator operations to normal working/business hours  
*OMC Study Group* proposed use of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to require any non-emergency use of generators to take place over normal business hours (8am-6pm M-F).
5. As a result of the above issues not addressed by City Group (noise), the Plaintiff has claimed a decrease in property value and would like to be compensated.  
The claim of causation related to decreased property value, in the case of CitiGroup, was solely based on noise (i.e. concerns 1-4). In the case of Ramsey, the *OMC Study Group* has developed mitigation proposals for all said concerns.

This specific case study is a good example of what the City of Ramsey should not do, or avoid, in respect to the development of the *Subject Property* for a potential data center project.

The *Findings Report* Appendix includes opinions from the City Attorney and CBRE, the pending lawsuit and disposition in Ohio, multiple articles provided by *OMC Study Group* members related to property values, and an example of how residential property valuations were effected before and after two (2) data centers were constructed in Elk River, and case law regarding land value disputes with Minnesota Cities.

## MEETING NOTES

This issue was highly discussed by the *OMC Study Group*, and perhaps, is the leading concern for surrounding property owners.

A number of questions were asked at this meeting. Follow up answers were provided via email, and are included in the *Findings Report Appendix* (click [here](#) to view, page 4). A different version of meeting notes was provided by an *OMC Study Group* member (click [here](#) to view).

## MITIGATION TECHNIQUES

In summary, an overall quality development including proper implementation of mitigation techniques as outlined in previous sections will protect property values. For example, proper residential transitioning techniques, quality building design, quality site layout, mitigation of specific *OMC Study Group* concerns (i.e. noise, safety and traffic), etc.

## INPUT/FEEDBACK (at meeting)

Below is an outline of concerns and input from *OMC Study Group* members:

1. Concern exists the net benefit of a data center proposal (i.e. tax revenues) does not outweigh the issues a data center development causes for surrounding property owners. A tax benefit for the City should not be put on the backs of the *OMC* neighborhood alone.

An article was provided by an *OMC Study Group* member which identifies the negative impact of industrial development on residential properties, titled "*The Impact of Industrial Sites on Residential Property Values: A Hedonic Pricing Analysis for the Netherlands.*" This article outlined a breakdown of residential property loss based on proximity to an industrial development. It was found, residential property value loss was realized from a distance up to 250 meters (or 820') from industrial developments.

An *OMC Study Group* member applied principles/findings from the identified article to the development scenario under consideration by the *OMC Study Group*; which is, a potential data center in Ramsey located adjacent to residential properties. Findings of the *OMC Study Group* member are minimum multiple-million dollar losses in property values for surrounding property owners, depending on the scenario applied.

Click here for resources: [Netherlands Pricing Analysis Article](#), [250 Meter Map of Subject Property](#), [OMC Study Group Member Report](#).

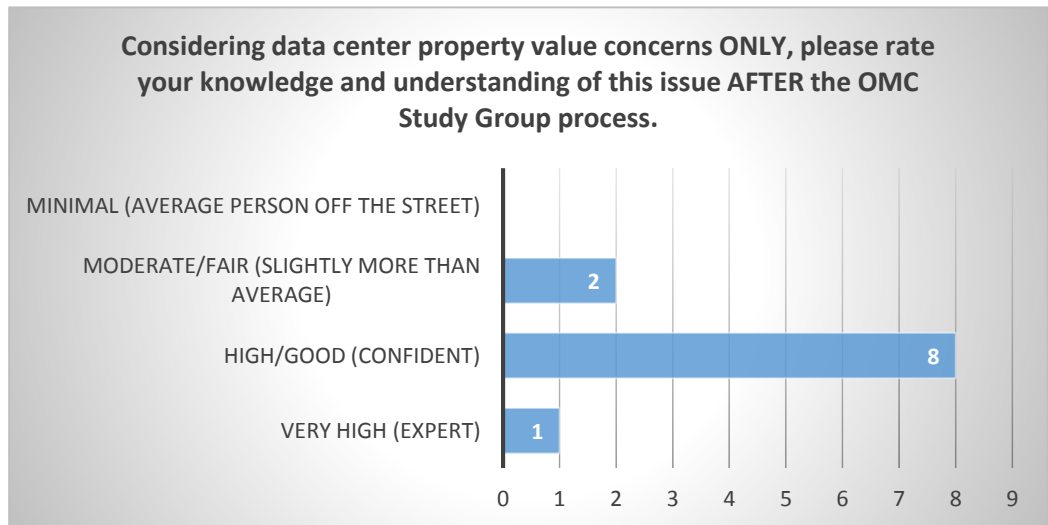
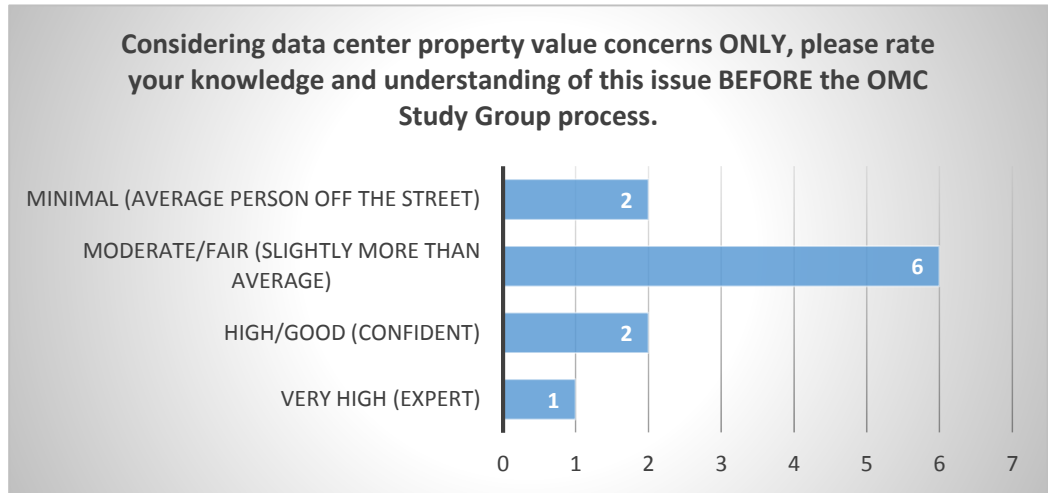
2. Very serious concern still exists by several *OMC Study Group* members a data center development located on the *Subject Property* will decrease values of surrounding properties by 10-15% minimum; and, will reduce the ability of future sales to occur. A number of *OMC Study Group* members indicated they had an opportunity to confirm this statement with various real estate agents and real estate appraisers.

NOTE: a few *OMC Study Group* members stated a data center will have no effect on surrounding property values. And, if developed correctly, a data center may be a positive for surrounding property values.

- 3. The City is unable to clearly state (conclusively) what the actual result of a data center development will be on surrounding property values. As a result, a number of *OMC Study Group* members are not comfortable with this issue.

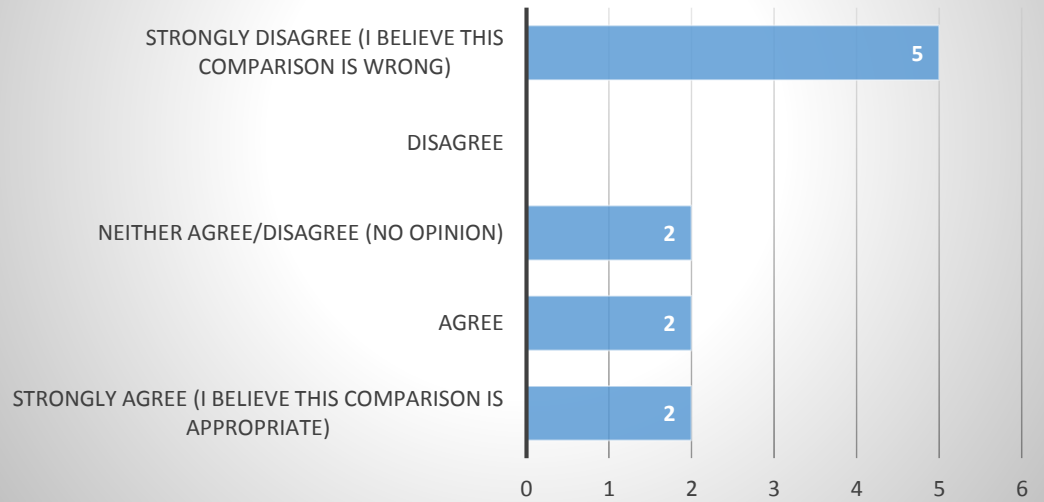
**INPUT/FEEDBACK** (final meeting survey, quantitative)

Listed below are results from a survey/poll conducted at the final *OMC Study Group* meeting. Eleven (11) of the possible thirteen (13) *OMC Study Group* members eligible to vote participated.

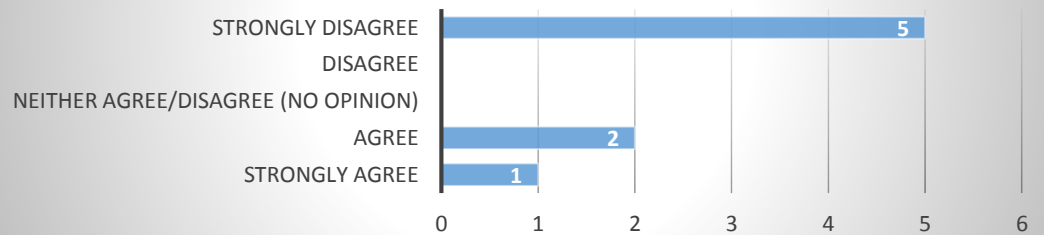


**The Subject Property is guided (zoned) for a municipal center or middle school campus; and, not guided (zoned) for a residential neighborhood or a public open space.**

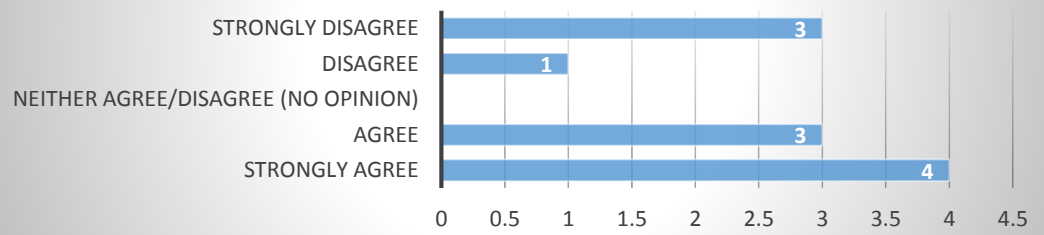
**When considering land values, the City is comparing the effect of a potential data center to the zoned use.**



**Considering property value concerns ONLY, if the Subject Property were developed for a data center user, I believe the City (and other germane regulatory agencies) have the ability to sufficiently address and mitigate concerns.**



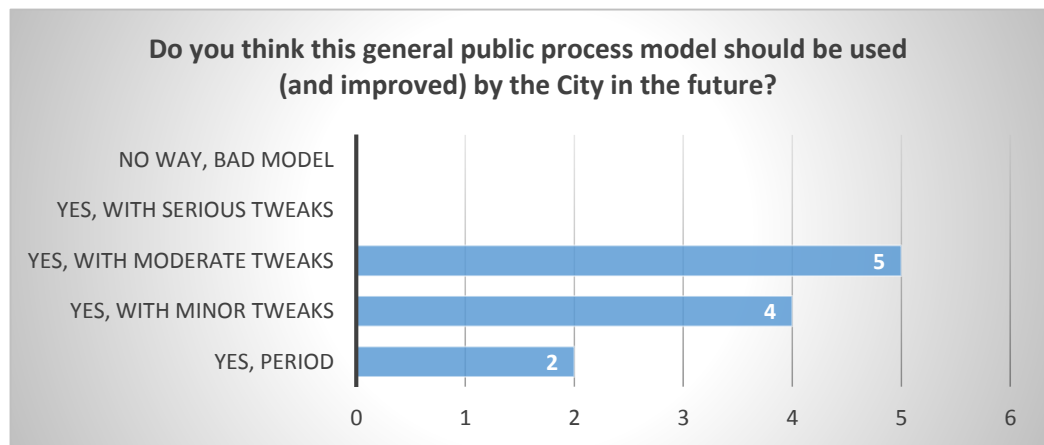
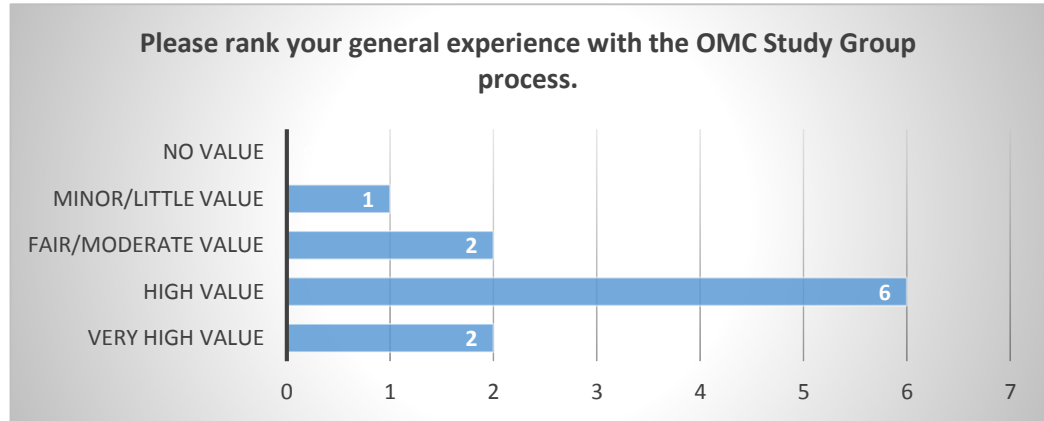
**Considering information and mitigation techniques discussed as part of the OMC Study Group Process, property value concerns for surrounding (or nearby) property owners should PREVENT the City from considering a data center development.**



## FEEDBACK SURVEY: GENERAL PROCESS

### Feedback Survey (final meeting survey, quantitative)

Listed below are results from a survey/poll conducted at the final *OMC Study Group* meeting. Eleven (11) of the possible thirteen (13) *OMC Study Group* members eligible to vote participated.



## APPENDIX

Due to the significant size and complexity of the *Findings Report* Appendix, an online database was developed for easy navigation. Items listed below are hyperlinks to downloadable Appendix documents.

### **NOISE SECTION**

[Noise Pollution Supplemental Meeting Information](#)  
[Noise Pollution Meeting Notes](#)  
[Noise Pollution Meeting Follow Up](#)  
[MPCA Noise Pollution Standards](#)  
[Study Group Member Input 1](#) (World Health Organization Guidelines)  
[Study Group Member Input 2](#) (Low Frequency Noise Article)  
[Study Group Member Input 3](#) (Acceptable DBA Levels at Night)  
[Study Group Member Input 4-14](#) (Various Articles and Diagrams)  
[Study Group Member Input 15](#) (Noise Source)

### **BLDG. DESIGN & SITE LAYOUT SECTION**

Supplemental Information Packet, multiple items:

[Landscape & Buffer Yard Regulations](#)  
[Example comparable Cities' setbacks for data centers](#)  
[Example site concept maps \(old\) and meeting instructions](#)  
[Example building designs](#)  
[Design & Layout Meeting Notes and Follow Up](#)  
[Revised Municipal Center Site Concept Maps](#) (result of this meeting)

### **SPOT ZONING SECTION**

[Supplemental Information Packet](#) (page 3)  
[Meeting Notes & Follow Up](#) (page 2)  
[Zoning Guide](#) (League of Minnesota Cities)

### **TRAFFIC SECTION**

[Supplemental Information Packet](#) (page 7)  
[Meeting Notes & Follow Up](#) (page 11)

### **SAFETY SECTION**

[Supplemental Information Packet](#) (page 9)  
[Meeting Notes & Follow Up](#) (page 15)

### **LAND VALUES SECTION**

[Supplemental Information Packet](#) (page 5)  
[Meeting Notes & Follow Up](#) (page 4)  
[Example Residential Land Valuation Changes](#) (Elk River)  
[Broker & Legal Input](#)  
[Case Law](#) provided by the League of MN Cities  
[Member Input 1](#) (The Impact of Airport Noise on Residential Real Estate)  
[Member Input 2](#) (Impact of Indust. Sites on Resid. Prop. Values)  
 Member Input 3 (Ohio CitiGroup Data Center [Lawsuit](#) & [Disposition](#))  
[Member Input 4](#) (250 meter setback map)  
[Member Input 5](#) (Analytic Application of Article, Property Value Loss)  
[Member Input 6](#) (Different Version of Meeting Notes)

### **OTHER**

[Property Reference Map](#) (Subject Property) [FAQs](#)  
[Public Petition](#), April 2013 [Original Public Input Summary](#), April 2013  
[Development Comparison Chart](#)  
[OMC Study Group Survey Results\\*](#)

(\*with responders' geographic location included--actual meeting data--doesn't include three responses mailed in after meeting).

Mailings: [#1](#), [#2](#), [#3](#), [#4](#), [#5](#), [#6](#)

Concept Maps: [#1](#), [#2](#), [#3](#)

[Feasibility Analysis](#) (04282014)

[05142014 EDA Meeting Summary](#)