

BERNALILLO COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

Data Center Case File

CaseLock Community Defense Intelligence Platform

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SECTION 1 — WHAT IS HAPPENING HERE

Bernalillo County, New Mexico (Albuquerque metro area, population ~680,000) is facing multiple data center proposals. In response, the County Commission passed landmark guardrails legislation on February 10, 2026.

Active Projects in Bernalillo County:

1. **Oppidan Investment Company** — 90,000 sq ft, 10 MW data center near 98th St NW and Unser Blvd NW, Westside Albuquerque. Construction began 2025, completion 2026.
2. **Dine Development Corporation / NOVA Corporation** — 130+ MW data center campus at Mesa del Sol Innovation Park, South Albuquerque. Tribally owned enterprise of the Navajo Nation.
3. **ADACEN** — Eco-friendly edge data center at Sunport South Business Park.

Major Regional Project (Valencia County, immediate south):

Meta (Facebook) Los Lunas Data Center — \$3.3+ billion, 750 acres, 8 buildings, 3.8 million sq ft (larger than the Pentagon). 40 MW per building. 1+ million MWh annual electricity (equivalent to 90,000 homes). Draws on shared PNM grid and Middle Rio Grande water.

Sources: Albuquerque Business First (April 2025), Data Center Dynamics, Meta Data Centers, MMCG Invest

SECTION 2 — COUNTY GUARDRAILS RESOLUTION (FEB 2026)

On February 10, 2026, the Bernalillo County Commission passed Administrative Resolution AR 2026-22 by a 4-1 vote, imposing strict requirements on data centers seeking taxpayer-funded incentives or Industrial Revenue Bonds (IRBs).

Key requirements of the resolution:

- Data centers must demonstrate zero net impact on public drinking water supplies
- Must favor air-cooled (dry cooling) or closed-loop recycling technology
- Must be accountable for their own electricity and water usage
- Must invest in community workforce development
- County may oppose state or federal legislation that does not protect the community

This is a MODEL resolution for other counties facing data center proposals. Bernalillo County is the first in New Mexico to impose such comprehensive guardrails.

Sources: bernco.gov (Feb 11, 2026), KRQE News, GovTech, Instagram (official 4-1 vote announcement)

SECTION 3 — WATER AND ENVIRONMENT

Water Provider: Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority (ABCWUA)

Primary Sources: Albuquerque Aquifer (Santa Fe Group Aquifer) and San Juan-Chama Drinking Water Project (Colorado River basin diversion via Rio Grande)

Evaporative cooling for hyperscale data centers requires 1-5 million gallons per day. In a high-desert environment under extreme drought stress, this is a critical concern. The Middle Rio Grande basin is subject to tight compact allocations under the Rio Grande Compact of 1938.

Meta Los Lunas Water: \$10M LEDA grant (largest in NM history) specifically for water rights acquisition and treatment facility. The state helped Meta secure water in a region where the aquifer is under stress.

Sources: Bernalillo County AR 2026-22, Western Resource Advocates, New Mexico Water Advocates

SECTION 4 — ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE

Serving Utility: PNM Resources (New Mexico's primary investor-owned utility)

Meta Los Lunas: Dedicated PNM substation commissioned November 2024. 1+ million MWh annual consumption.

Phase 3: Two additional buildings explicitly for AI/ML workloads, \$800M budget, approved via Industrial Revenue Bonds December 2024.

Sources: PNM Resources filings, MMCG Invest analysis, Meta Data Centers

SECTION 5 — TAX DEALS AND INCENTIVES

Meta Los Lunas incentive structure (model for concerns about Bernalillo County):

- \$30 billion IRB authorization (ceiling, not commitment)
- 30-year property tax exemption
- PILOT: \$50K-\$450K/year (incredibly low for a \$3.3B facility)

- 75% GRT reimbursement capped at \$1.6M/year
- \$10M LEDA grant for water rights

For a \$3.3 billion facility, annual payments of \$50K-\$450K represent a tiny fraction of what property taxes would generate. The 30-year exemption locks the community out of revenue for a generation.

SECTION 6 — KEY OFFICIALS

Bernalillo County Commission (5 members):

- District 1: Barbara Baca
- District 2: Frank Baca
- District 3: Adriann Barboa
- District 4: Walt Benson
- District 5: Eric C. Olivas

Source: bernco.gov official website

SECTION 7 — WHAT YOU CAN DO

1. **Support the guardrails resolution** — Bernalillo County already took action; ensure it is enforced
2. **Monitor IRB applications** — Attend County Commission meetings when data center incentives are discussed
3. **Demand water impact studies** before any new data center approval
4. **Track PNM interconnection queue** — Watch for new high-capacity grid connections
5. **File IPRA requests** (NM Inspection of Public Records Act) for communications between developers and county officials
6. **Reference the guardrails resolution** as a model for other NM counties facing similar proposals

SECTION 8 — KEY SOURCES

1. Bernalillo County Resolution AR 2026-22 (Feb 10, 2026) — bernco.gov
2. Albuquerque Business First (April 15, 2025) — Oppidan data center
3. MMCG Invest — Meta Los Lunas \$3.3B analysis
4. Data Center Dynamics — NM data center filings
5. Western Resource Advocates — Data center water impacts
6. Source NM — Project Jupiter and statewide data center legislation
7. KOB 4 News — County moratorium considerations
8. Food & Water Watch — Project Jupiter analysis (July 2026)