Rural county plan

A well owner may need a water test before excavation; a volunteer fire district may need equipment before the first truck arrives. Involve both, along with farmers and the water supplier. Approach affected Tribal governments separately, on their own terms.

Well testing and water limits

The operator pays for an independent lab chosen by [water district and resident representatives]. Offer well owners a depth and water-quality test before digging; keep home locations private. For each water source, specify the daily peak and annual limits, expected consumption, discharge quality, sampling points and cuts during drought. Keep daily readings. Publish monthly totals, the highest-use day, water returned, the drought stage and any violations or repairs. The monitor checks the daily logs. If [trigger] occurs, the operator supplies drinking water and pays for an independent investigation. Agree in advance what evidence will require a permanent repair.

Road repairs and fire equipment

The road superintendent and fire chief estimate the cost of road repairs, training and equipment. The developer deposits [amount] before construction. Inspect haul roads and bridges before and after truck traffic. If the developer leaves damage unrepaired after written notice and the agreed deadline, the county may use the repair guarantee.

Local training and farm internet service

Residents decide how to spend [annual amount] from the benefits fund. They might pay for trades training or better internet service for farms. The board publishes awards, eligibility and receipts every year. For training, specify [paid places per class] and [wage]; report how many people finish and find jobs. Name the fund holder who can collect an overdue payment under the agreement.

> In August 2026, Salix, Iowa, voted down a proposed pause; a local organizer asked for both town and rural residents to be heard. That vote did not approve a campus. In New Mexico, Doña Ana County's signed Project Jupiter agreement separates water commitments from scheduled payments. Its guarantee covers specified unpaid amounts; it does not guarantee damages for every breach.

Mason County, Kentucky: school payments per building

The county's agreement summary sets supplemental annual school payments at $2 million per building. Its $15 million public-safety fee is included in the infrastructure commitment. The summary gives the amounts due. It does not say which payments the county has received.

Ask the school board to publish a building-by-building schedule: what starts the annual payment, what is due if construction stops, and which deposits cleared. Do not count the safety fee a second time.

Water reporting in Malaysia

Malaysia offers another way to check water use. Its data center incentive guidelines call for tracking water use against the electricity used by computing equipment. Ask for the meter total as well as the ratio: a larger campus can use less water per unit of electricity and still draw more from local wells.

Olkaria, Kenya: when does the clock start?

In Kenya, the government, G42 and Microsoft signed a letter of intent in May 2024. The target to open a cloud region within 24 months starts when the parties sign definitive agreements. The $1 billion announcement covered several national initiatives; it did not promise that sum to Olkaria. In August 2026 KenGen said the campus was still being designed; lake patrol leader Grace Kimani called for residents to help monitor water use. In your agreement, give each local payment its own recipient, amount and due date. Say what the operator owes if construction never starts.

Sample agreement

Project: [site and phases]. Parties: [landowner], [operator], [guarantor] and [community signatories]. Replace the brackets with local names, amounts and deadlines before anyone signs.

Resident representation

Residents choose their representatives at an open meeting. Include renters and neighbors outside the tax district. The developer pays for interpretation and an independent adviser from a separate account. Publish the draft for [review period] and respond publicly to suggested changes. Residents may participate and still oppose the project.

Payments to the community

The operator pays [fund holder] [amount] when [milestone] occurs, then [amount] each year, adjusted for inflation using [index]. Residents hold a majority of seats on the board that awards grants. The board publishes its conflict-of-interest rules; the treasurer posts receipts and spending every quarter. List taxes, tax breaks, infrastructure reimbursements and gifts separately from the promised payments.

Who can enforce each term

Put payments in the signed agreement, land-use restrictions in the permit and electricity charges in the approved utility terms. Ask local counsel who has authority to sign and enforce each one. Any right for residents to enforce the agreement must be written into it. The agreement cannot replace environmental review, public hearings or Tribal consultation, or change treaty rights.

Missed payments and complaints

Residents choose an independent monitor who can inspect invoices, meter readings and payroll with names removed. The operator deposits [annual monitoring budget] through closure. Each quarter the monitor publishes what was due, paid, late or disputed, with the supporting records. Residents can call [phone] or file with [office] online. The office acknowledges complaints within [days] and publishes outcomes without names. After written notice, the operator has [days] to fix a breach. Specify who may draw on [financial guarantee] if it does not, who decides disputes and where either party can appeal.

Sale or closure

Before construction, the owner provides a financial guarantee for the independently estimated cost of restoring the site. Update the estimate and guarantee every [interval]. Release the original owner only after a buyer accepts the obligations in writing and supplies replacement security. List payments that remain due if work stops early. Publish the signed schedules, amendments, annual audits and final inspection.

Payment and inspection record

Make a copy for each obligation:

- Work promised: [starting condition], [target and units], [deadline].
- Payment: [who owes it], [budget and source], [amount due], [amount paid], [recipient and date].
- Inspection: [who checks the work], [public record], [next review date].
- If the operator falls short: [who gives notice], [time to fix it], [remedy and who can use it].

For home repairs, for example, the budget shows what the city approved. A paid invoice and a final inspection show which repairs were finished. Record both.

Before the vote, read out any unresolved terms. Attach the payment and inspection records to the agreement. Record who signed, the vote date and where residents can get a copy.

If your community has a moratorium

Ask the clerk for the adopted text, amendments, effective and end dates, application map, and exemptions for existing approvals. A proposal, an advisory vote and an enacted pause have different effects. A dated tracker entry does not establish that a pause is still in force.

During a pause, use only the activities the text permits. Ask the authorized body to publish outstanding studies, resident objections and what remains unresolved before its next public decision. Compare a smaller project, delay, relocation and no project. A private agreement cannot lift a public restriction.

Find the jurisdiction in the tracker's Moratoriums directory.

Sources

For a public meeting, these guides can help residents decide which documents to request. Each local example links to the record it describes.

- NAACP: Stop Dirty Data — publish project impacts before bargaining over money; residents need time and independent advice.
- American Rivers: Data Centers and Rivers — ask separately about water withdrawn, water returned, discharge quality and who pays for new capacity (pp. 7–10).
- World Resources Institute: Powering Progress — distinguish who signs from who benefits; design training that gives workers options beyond a single campus.
- Federation of American Scientists: finding eight agreements — ask the clerk for executed contracts and exhibits; a promise to file a later plan leaves terms unsettled.
- Science for Georgia: community benefit agreements — name the person who measures compliance and the party able to enforce each requirement.

Compare these proposals with Microsoft's company-wide commitments on power, jobs and taxes. Ask who will sign for the local campus, how much is due and when. None of the organizations listed here has endorsed these drafts.

Editable draft and sources: https://pranava0x0.github.io/datacenterpolicytracker/community-benefits.html#rural