

Analysis: GOP split on Miller's ascension

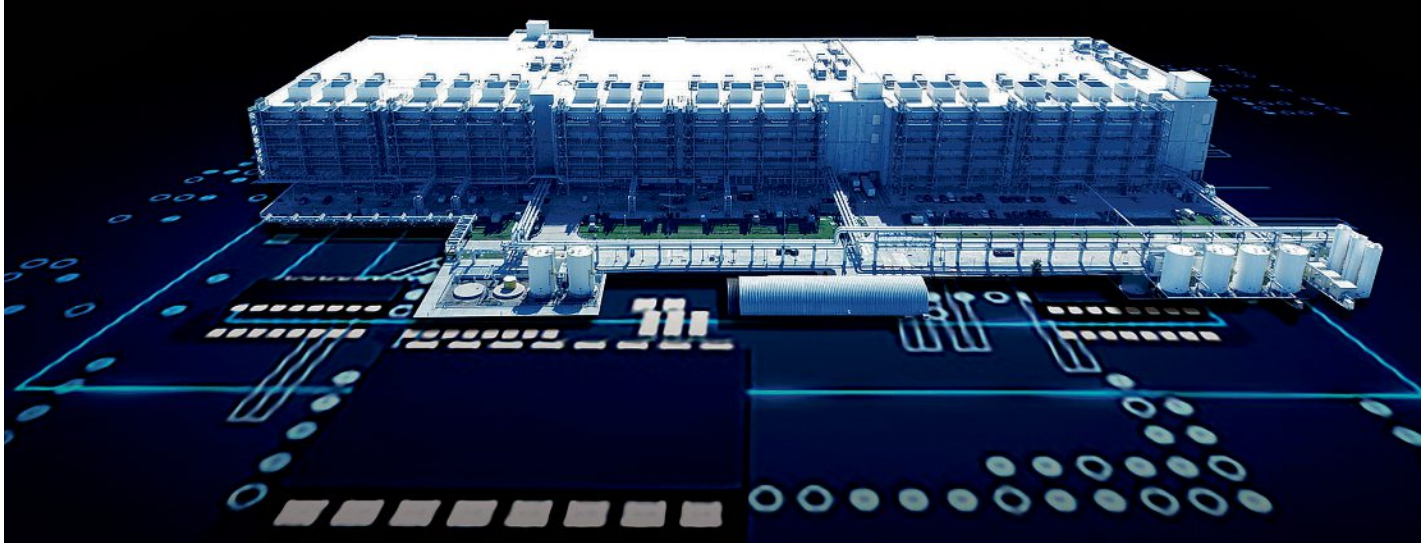
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The Herald-Times

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DATA CENTERS: BENEFITS & BURDENS

PROCESSING THE IMPACT



20 years in, how data centers changed one town's economy



Byron McCauley
Columnist
USA TODAY NETWORK – MICHIGAN

COUNCIL BLUFFS, Iowa –

When the folks from Big Data eye your town for a hyperscale data center, read their lips when they start talking impact, numbers and benefits.

• Nearly two decades ago, Council Bluffs made a starter deal with Google: tax advantages in exchange for economic investment in the form of 200 permanent, good-paying jobs and millions in tax revenue. In 2007, Google announced an initial $600 million hyperscale data center on the site of the city's only remaining drive-in movie theater that had operated since 1950. The original building was 100,000 square feet when it opened. **See DATA CENTERS, Page 7A**

More online

Scan the QR code for the full three-part series, videos, photos, polls, previous coverage and more about the impact of data centers on local communities.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY REESE STRICKLAND, GRAPHIC BY GETTYIMAGES AND ROBIN FERGUSON

2-way plan for College and Walnut gets stalled

Boris Ladwig
The Herald-Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Thomson administration's plan to convert College Avenue and Walnut Street to two-way traffic will be discussed for a second time by the Bloomington Transportation Commission in December after a divided commission stopped short of advancing the proposal Monday, Nov. 16.

Three of the commission's nine members on Monday voted in favor of advancing the proposal to the plan commission with a positive recommendation. While that fell short of the required five votes, two members abstained pending more information, with one of those saying he was inclined to support the matter as well. In addition, two members were absent this week.

The commission then voted unanimously to continue the matter to its Dec. 7 meeting.

Under the proposal, College and Walnut, two major one-way arteries that bring vehicle traffic north and south through the city, would revert to two-way traffic with dedicated turn lanes. The change would mark a major shift in how vehicles move through downtown Bloomington, but city officials say it would improve accessibility, connectivity and safety.

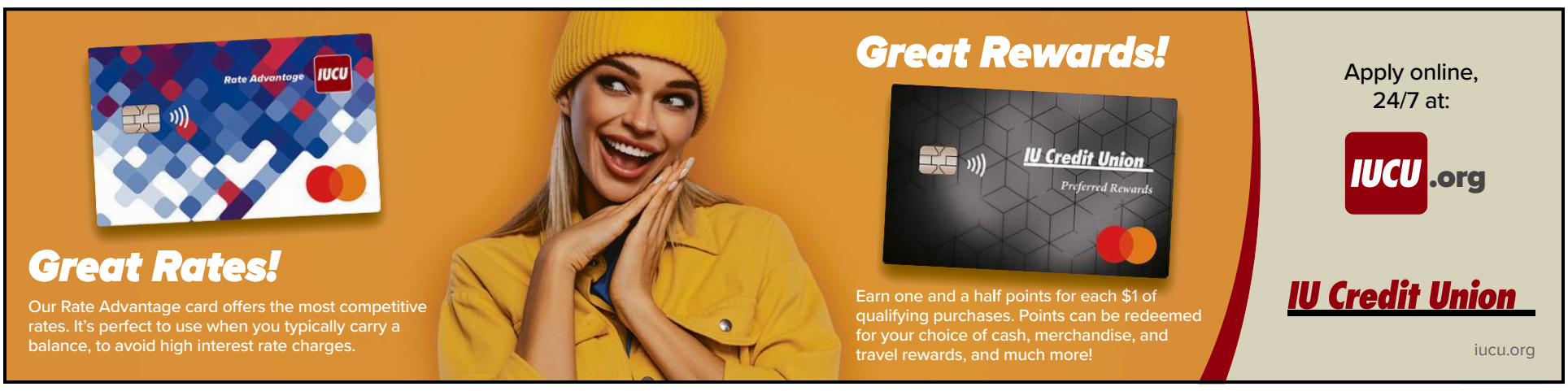
The city says it would preserve parking in the downtown area, implement "structured delivery zones" and improved pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. The city's planning department has said the two-way concept would aim to reduce motor vehicle speeds to posted speed limits. The limits vary along the corridor but are as low as 20 mph in the downtown area.

Officials also have emphasized that the change would take many years to implement, in part because its more than $100 million price tag would likely require the city to secure federal funding. The conversion to two-way traffic would be the last of a multiphase project, Ryan Robling, planning services manager for the city's planning and transportation department, said this week.

If the proposal clears the transportation commission in December, the plan also would face scrutiny from the plan commission and city council and likely further pushback from the public.

The planning department is recom-

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