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SPORTS, 1B

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ARK DATA CENTERS

Expanding facility eyes water, power, noise plans



Akron Ward 5 Councilman Johnnie Hannah talks about Ark Data Centers' expansion of its South Akron data center Oct. 30. AKRON BEACON JOURNAL

3-year construction project to begin in South Akron

Akron Beacon Journal

With the approval of Akron City Council, Ark Data Centers is planning to begin a roughly three-year construction project within the next six months expanding its South Akron facility.

Ark will extend its approximately 54,000-square-foot data center at 191 E. Miller Ave. to about 282,000 square feet as it increases its power output from about 5 to 41 megawatts, the Cedar Rapids, Iowa-based company said via email.

Akron Councilman Johnnie Hannah represents Ward 5, bordering Miller Avenue just south of the data center. He said he supports Ark's expansion following a tour of the existing facility with fellow council members this summer and hosting an October ward meeting where Ark Chief Technology Officer Ken Kremer spoke.

"He let everyone at my meeting know that they wouldn't have anything to worry about as far as the expansion over in the industrial park on the south side," Hannah said.

> **"I was so impressed with their operation and how they had this closed-loop system."**
>
> **Margo Sommerville**
> Akron City Council president

Council President Margo Sommerville represents Ward 3, where the data center is located and expanding.

She said she was impressed after touring the facility with other council members.

"I had never been to a data center and had not very much knowledge on what a data center actually even does," Sommerville said. "But I was so impressed with their operation and how they had this closed-loop system where they're making sure they're using very little water and trying to be as efficient as they possibly can."

She said she heard very little noise on the visit.

Ark has been operating in Akron for more than 15 years, Sommerville said.

"They're providing critical services to all of our major hospitals and a lot of our businesses," she said.

What are Ark's estimates for water, power and noise levels?

Ark said it does not draw on local water supplies with its closed-loop cooling and will follow the same approach post-expansion. Last year, the South Akron campus used 160,000 gallons of water, just over the amount a family of four uses.

The company said it also is building its own electrical substation and covering the costs so that expense won't be passed on to FirstEnergy customers.

Noise levels of facility cooling equipment currently measure 70 to 80 decibels and decrease to about 50 decibels at the property line, the company said.

Moderate rainfall is 50 decibels, while traffic and vacuums are 70

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ELECTION 2026

Observers are likely at Ohio's polling sites

Akron Beacon Journal

Of the many layers meant to protect the integrity of Ohio's elections, poll observers are one small but important part.

J. Cherie Strachan, director of the Ray C. Bliss Institute of Applied Politics at the University of Akron, said political pundits are anticipating high levels of poll observers nationwide this cycle.

But the role isn't without its risks.

"I do think serving as a poll watcher, or in any service capacity, is less safe in the current political environment," she said. "Rudeness and polarization, especially when election results are routinely called into question, lead to an escalation in violence."

According to the Ohio Secretary of State's manual for election officials, "All observers (except recount observers and Congressional Election Observers) must be qualified Ohio voters. They don't need to be registered in the county where they observe."

Senate Democrats recently

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Must be qualified voters, can be from any county



The "Ohio Voted" insignia is seen during early voting Oct. 27 at the Summit County Board of Elections in Akron. ANDREW DOLPH/ AKRON BEACON JOURNAL

What you need to know before you vote on Election Day

Akron Beacon Journal

Voters across Summit County and statewide are heading to the polls Nov. 3 to decide the fate of numerous local and state races and local tax levies.

To confirm that you are registered to vote, visit the Ohio Secretary of State's voter lookup tool at https://voterlookup.ohiosos.gov/voterlookup.aspx.

Registered voters can find their correct polling location by visiting the Board of Elections website at https://lookup.boe.ohio.gov/vtrapp/summit/pollfinder.aspx#.

Voters must show a valid form of photo identification with their name and photograph. Note that the ID can't be expired.

Valid forms of photo ID include:

- Ohio driver license, state of Ohio ID card, or interim ID form issued by the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles.
- A U.S. passport or U.S. passport card.
- A U.S. military ID card, U.S. military dependent ID card, Ohio National Guard ID card, or U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs ID card.

Visit BeaconJournal.com for the latest election results.

Valid form of photo ID required at polls

Time to vote

Polls are open Election Day from 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

81,903 early or absentee ballots distributed in Summit County

Akron Beacon Journal

For four weeks, Summit County voters descended on the Board of Elections to cast their early vote in this year's general election.

As of Nov. 2, Democrats utilized early voting opportunities more than Republicans, but independent voters outstripped both parties, according to the absentee voting report on the Summit County Board of Elections' website.

Over 10,000 Republicans have voted early compared to more than

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Early voters Oct. 27 at the Summit County Board of Elections in Akron. ANDREW DOLPH/ AKRON BEACON JOURNAL

Inside

5 things to watch on Election Day. **4A**

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