

From: [Dr Tyler](#)
To: [planadmin](#)
Subject: Petition against Midtown zoning, data center, self storage
Date: Friday, July 17, 2026 6:05:26 PM
Attachments: [City Plan Commission Cover Letter .pdf](#)
[Copy of Plan Commission Statement.pdf](#)

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Petition against Midtown zoning, data center, self stor...

Date: July 17, 2026

TO: The City Plan Commission and the Department of City Development

RE: Public Comment and Formal Objection — Midtown Commons Phase II Development

FROM: Dr. Melita Pate-Tyler & Consonants of the Midtown surrounding Neighborhoods

Meeting July 20 2026 (I believe)

To the Honorable Members of the Common Council:

As a deeply invested educational professional, homeowner, and community advocate within the Midtown area, I am writing to you on behalf of myself and the undersigned residents of our neighborhood and Milwaukee residents. Enclosed with this letter, please find our formal community petition outlining our critical concerns and objections regarding the proposed Midtown Commons Phase II development project.

Our neighborhood values thoughtful, sustainable growth. However, the current scope of the Phase II proposal presents significant infrastructure risks, strains local resources, and deviates from established zoning compliance standards that protect the safety and integrity of our community.

We respectfully request that the Common Council take the following legislative actions:

1. **Refer this petition** to the Zoning, Neighborhoods, and Development (ZND) Committee for a rigorous public hearing. We Don't want data centers, or self storage. We do not want zoning deviations. We want the promise the city has made in the DIZ zoning. We want housing that matches surrounding neighborhoods- not what is proposed.
2. **Direct the Department of City Development (DCD)** to conduct an updated independent infrastructure and traffic impact assessment that reflects current neighborhood density.
3. DNR included for impact study of 200 apartments on sewer system of the area and surrounding neighborhoods

4. **Delay any final zoning variances or project approvals** until the developer addresses the specific compliance and safety remedies outlined by the community in the attached petition.

Our neighborhood stands ready to engage in a transparent, data-driven dialogue with city officials and developers to ensure that any development in Midtown serves the long-term interest of its families and residents.

Thank you for your leadership, your dedication to Milwaukee's neighborhoods, and your timely review of this matter. Please enter this City Plan Commission cover letter, City Plan Commission statement, and the attached signature sheets- (Petition against Midtown zoning, data center, self storage.pdf and 2 Petition against Midtown zoning, data center, self storage 2) into the official Council file records.

Respectfully submitted,

please see the following 4 attachments:

1. shared Petition against Midtown zoning, data center, self storage petition (Top of email)
2. 2 Petition for Midtown zoning, data center, self storage 2
3. City Plan Commission cover letter
4. City Plan Commission statement

Dr. Melita Pate-Tyler

On behalf of the Surrounding Midtown Neighborhood Petitioners

Dr. Melita Tyler

On behalf of the Surrounding Midtown Neighborhood Petitioners

[numb. 2 Petition against Midtown zoning, data center, self storage](#)

[Plan commission final statement.pdf](#)

Date: July 19, 2026

TO: City Plan Commission

FROM: Dr. Melita Tyler & constituents of the surrounding Midtown Neighborhood

Primary Contact: Dr. Melita Tyler

RE: Formal Community Objection and Neighborhood Petition Regarding Midtown Commons Phase II Development Project - this includes

Formal Community Objections to:

- **Zone Deviation Request / Self-Storage Proposal (Trent Overhue / AFS Milwaukee LLC / Northern States Investments)**
- **Midtown Commons – Phase II (Gorman & Company / Trent Overhue LIHTC Application)**

City Plan Commission,

As a deeply invested educational professional, homeowner, and community advocate within the Midtown area, I am writing to you on behalf of myself and the undersigned residents of our neighborhood and Milwaukee residents. Enclosed with this letter, please find our formal community petition outlining our critical concerns and objections regarding the proposed Midtown Commons Phase II development project. We opposed the earlier proposed data center. We oppose the deviation request for self storage, we oppose the housing as proposed.

Our neighborhood values thoughtful, sustainable growth. However, the current scope of the Phase II proposal presents significant infrastructure risks, strains local resources, and deviates from established zoning compliance standards that protect the safety and integrity of our community.

We respectfully request that the Common Council take the following legislative actions:

1. **Refer this petition** to the Planning Commission, Zoning, Neighborhoods, and Development (ZND) Committee and where ever also applicable.
2. **Impact Study:**

Conduct an independent traffic and pedestrian impact assessment that reflects current neighborhood density versus one with additional 200 units worth of people.

Conduct Independent environmental impact study is conducted in consultation with the Wisconsin DNR addressing the watershed/sewer impact to the immediate area and surrounding neighborhoods

3. **Deny any final zoning variances or project approvals** until the developer addresses the specific compliance and safety remedies outlined by the community in the attached petition. This includes the Gorman's housing.
4. **Deny the request for zoning deviation for self storage.**

Our neighborhood stands ready to engage in a transparent, data-driven dialogue with city officials and developers to ensure that any development in Midtown serves the long-term interest of its families and residents.

Thank you for your leadership, your dedication to Milwaukee's neighborhoods, and your timely review of this matter. Please enter this attached Plan Commission Final Cover Letter, the attached Plan Commission final statement, and the attached signature sheets (Petition against Midtown zoning, data center, self storage **and** _numb. 2 Petition against Midtown zoning, data center, self storage) into the official Council file records.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Melita Tyler

On behalf of the Surrounding Midtown Neighborhood Petitioners

Date: July 19, 2026

To: The Milwaukee Plan Commission

Subject: Formal Community Objections to:

- **Zone Deviation Request / Self-Storage Proposal (Trent Overhue / AFS Milwaukee LLC / Northern States Investments)**
- **Midtown Commons – Phase II (Gorman & Company / Trent Overhue LIHTC Application)**

1. The Self-Storage Zoning Deviation: A Rejected "Dead Use"

Zoning protections exist to shield neighborhoods from predatory land use. When Trent Overhue purchased this property, he did so with full knowledge of its Development Incentive Zone (DIZ) restrictions. In October of 2023, Overhue proposed using the rear of the building for an indoor self-storage facility while creating four commercial storefronts at the front, alongside a parking lot, dog park, and food truck park. This Commission unanimously rejected that self-storage plan. Area Alderman Mark Chambers Jr. rightly stated then that *"the storage facility, it kills development,"* while the community and commissioners agreed that a self-storage business simply does not fit this neighborhood.

Those facts have not changed. Keeping the main self-storage business model and simply switching out a dog park for 200 apartment units and earmarking one storefront for a relocated library does not suddenly turn self-storage into a creator of jobs or a driver of economic vitality. It remains a "dead use" of premium community space that should be used to fulfill the DIZ promise to Milwaukee. Self-storage is neither a need nor a want in this community. The Commission must not accept minor design concessions that offer up a similar proposal to the originally rejected proposal as a justification to bypass the community master plan.

2. The Capitol Library Relocation: A Non-Transparent Bargaining Chip

The proposal to relocate the Capitol Library branch is an unethical shell game being used as a private bargaining chip to force zoning deviations.

- **Lack of Transparency:** On June 29, 2026, Alderwoman Sharlen P. Moore testified that she and her District 10 constituents were completely excluded from this dialogue. She was deceptively handed this package as a done deal, robbing residents of their opportunity to be heard. Alderman Chambers prioritizes district 2 voices (although residents that spoke at city hall against the proposal were ignored) but did not value district 10 voices in the decision about their district 10 library. Moving a vital public anchor institution should be driven by equitable community access, not backroom political maneuvering.
- **Flooding Mismatch:** The existing library has faced severe flooding issues—yet the city is considering moving it directly into an area with an even more acute, documented stormwater and sewer backup challenge—the former Capitol Court marshland.
- **Vacated Infrastructure:** Alderman Mark Chambers noted that the library has been passed over time and time again for updates. The answer to past municipal neglect is not to leave another neighborhood with a vacant building.

3. Deliberate Concealment of Health Risks & Developer Misrepresentation

Gorman & Company and Trent Overhue originally designed a high-density residential project intentionally adjacent to a heavy-utility industrial data center, actively concealing major environmental hazards. The developers failed to maintain transparent communication regarding the heavy-industrial environmental impact of placing a high-voltage data center immediately adjacent to densely populated neighborhoods and a dense proposed 200 units of apartments. Specifically, they systematically downplayed or obscured critical operational hazards:

- **Hazardous Material Storage:** Based on the proposed 7-to-10 megawatt power draw, an emergency backup system would have required an estimated 30,000 gallons of highly combustible diesel fuel stored on-site—introducing severe fire and chemical spill risks directly to a residential neighborhood.
- **The "Indoor Generator" Misrepresentation:** The developers disingenuously claimed that moving massive generators indoors would eliminate public risk. In reality, enclosed generators do not erase toxic particulate emissions or air pollution; they simply require high-velocity exhaust systems that release concentrated pollutants and a persistent, low-frequency acoustic hum directly into the surrounding airspace.
- **Toxic Chemical Coolants:** While the developer marketed the facility as an environmentally friendly "closed-loop water system" consuming minimal water, they were never required to prove water usage data. Furthermore, they withheld the reality that industrial closed loops require heavy chemical treatments to prevent bio-fouling, along with toxic industrial anti-freeze additives to prevent freezing during severe Milwaukee winters.
- **Severe Dual-Grid Strain:** The developers were not transparent about the combined burden this facility would place on local utilities. It threatens to severely strain the local energy grid while simultaneously overloading an adjacent municipal stormwater and sewer system that is already vulnerable to frequent, catastrophic neighborhood flooding.

That they only stripped the data center from the proposal after being caught by organized community outcry demonstrates a reactive desire to secure funding, rather than a proactive commitment to resident health.

- **A Pattern of Out-of-State Shell Companies:** This lack of transparency is hardcoded into how the developer operates. The applicant listed on these papers isn't a permanent neighbor; it is a single-purpose shell company called AFS Milwaukee LLC, designed from day one to act as a legal shield for a developer based in Springfield, Missouri. Overhue's core commercial real estate operations are conducted under Northern States Investments, while his family business infrastructure historically used a home base in Council Bluffs, Iowa. If this high-density project causes severe infrastructure or flooding issues down the line, these out-of-state parent entities are legally insulated, leaving Milwaukee taxpayers to deal with the long-term consequences.
- **The Missouri Data Center Misrepresentation:** This pattern carries directly into his interactions with this Commission. On June 29, 2026, Overhue actively misled the public and the Planning Commission by agreeing to a site visit to his "comparable" data center in Marshfield, MO, where the Commission expressed the need to examine the site and hear the noise produced and hear from residents about their experience. Public records show that the Marshfield site (Rifle Range Road)—built under yet another shell company, Lumon Solutions—is **not currently complete or operational**. While initially expected to be completed by June 1st, construction delays for prefabricated modular units and local utility coordination have pushed the testing window further away. You cannot evaluate the noise, community impact, or safety of a facility that is not up and running. This was a misrepresentation to the City of Milwaukee and residents.
- **Exploiting a Lack of Oversight:** Trent Overhue is based in Springfield, but he didn't build his data center inside Springfield city limits where strict zoning laws apply. Instead, his Missouri site was

intentionally placed in an unincorporated area lacking stringent municipal zoning codes and building permits, allowing him to entirely bypass regular scrutiny. This lack of oversight allowed construction crews to "roll dozers" and begin heavy grading before the local community even knew what was happening. While Webster County eventually tried to course-correct by calling an emergency meeting to enact an immediate 120-day moratorium, they had no retroactive recourse over the data center already under construction. Because Milwaukee does not currently have specific legislative regulations targeting these data centers, our city is left similarly exposed to exploitation. While Milwaukee does possess DIZ protections, the developer assumed they could be bypassed—and he continues to try to do so by forcing this self-storage deviation.

Formal Objections to the Midtown Commons – Phase II Residential Project

While our community deeply understands and supports the critical need for quality affordable housing, the history, layout, and placement of this proposed 200-unit development present severe structural safety, environmental, and zoning violations that have not been resolved. We urge the Plan Commission to deny the LIHTC application and zoning support based on three critical factors:

A. Severe Traffic and Pedestrian Dangers for Children

- **High-Crash Corridors:** Forcing a 200-unit (or two 100-unit) high-density residential complex into the narrow "traffic triangle" bounded by W. Fond du Lac Avenue, W. Capitol Drive, and N. 51st and 60th Streets easily places approximately 800 new vulnerable residents and their children directly inside one of Milwaukee's most notorious, high-injury reckless driving corridors. The influx of people and cars may have a profound negative impact. A study is needed here to show impact to traffic and pedestrians.
- **Egregious Playground Layout:** Compounding this danger, the site layout positions the designated children's playground as an island entirely surrounded by a high-capacity commercial parking lot and access streets. Forcing children to play in the direct path of blind spots and delivery traffic demonstrates a fundamental disregard for human safety. A parking lot is not a park.

B. Critical Infrastructure Strain and Flood Zone Risks

- **Chronically Stressed Sewer System:** The Midtown Shopping area sits on a historic, low-lying watershed (the former Capitol Court marshland). This geographic pocket is already plagued by a chronically stressed municipal sewer system. Just earlier this year, severe storms triggered widespread basement backups, unlocking federal FEMA individual assistance for Milwaukee County. Due to the high frequency of these infrastructure failures, it has become increasingly difficult for neighborhood residents to get claims approved.
- **Increased Runoff:** Dropping massive concrete foundations and a 200-unit residential footprint onto this high-risk watershed will drastically increase non-permeable surfaces. This guarantees severe stormwater runoff and will possibly force hazardous sewage backups into the new units and definitely into surrounding neighborhoods and homes.
- **Environmental Impact Study Required:** We formally request that no further development be considered until an independent environmental impact study is conducted in consultation with the Wisconsin DNR addressing the watershed/sewer impact to the immediate area and surrounding neighborhoods as well as an independent company to conduct an impact study on traffic/pedestrian dangers.

C. Direct Violation of the Development Incentive Zone (DIZ)

- **Persistent Scale Non-Compliance:** This project remains completely out of step with local zoning protections. The DIZ explicitly dictates architecture and building scales that harmoniously fit the existing neighborhood fabric. There are zero 200-unit complexes or double 100-unit complexes in this immediate area. Forcing a high-density complex of this scale into the neighborhood fundamentally violates the strict intent and guidelines of the DIZ.
- **The Affordable Housing "Carrot":** The developers explicitly attempted to use affordable housing and a public library relocation as structural "carrots" to bait the city into approving an otherwise unwanted, non-compliant industrial storage facility—an application that was already rightfully denied and completely opposes the community-centric intent of the DIZ.
- **Lack of Local Management Infrastructure:** Long term, Milwaukee's housing needs would be better addressed by single-family homes and duplexes or stock that fits the existing community. Milwaukee would benefit far more from stable home-ownership programs and from employing local builders and local managers. Distantly managed, national corporations often lack the local infrastructure required to provide the rapid, attentive oversight required to adequately address neighborhood grievances, time-sensitive resident concerns, and building maintenance emergencies.

Conclusion

Milwaukee must take its stewardship of vulnerable populations seriously. Milwaukee must also take the stewardship of its residents' voices seriously. Affordable housing should never be built by entities who view basic child safety, public health, and environmental risk as negotiable chips to be traded away until the public catches on to them. Even with a modified layout, these developers have shown us exactly who they are.

We respectfully urge the Plan Commission to protect our neighborhood and deny all zoning deviations, tax credits, and administrative support for this project. Keep true to the promises the city has made to its residents through DIZ zoning by not granting these deviations.

Sincerely,

Dr. Tyler

Petition Against MidTown Data Center

We, the undersigned residents of Sherman Park, live, shop, and raise families south of the Midtown Shopping area. We stand profoundly opposed to the proposed zoning deviations, which threaten to permanently turn a vital community corridor with potential into an isolated tech dead zone.

We reject any proposal for a storage facility, data center or digital infrastructure facility in any form—including any facility dedicated to data storage, processing, server hosting, or research—regardless of whether it is marketed or classified as a tech campus, innovation hub, research facility or high density computing operation. This regressive project completely subverts the established purpose of the Midtown Development Incentive Zone (DIZ), which requires a pedestrian-friendly, neighborhood-compatible, and active mixed-use environment.

Instead, we demand a neighborhood-first investment that serves actual resident needs:

- **Housing & Education:** Stable single-family housing stock and a brand-new public library as foundations for community growth.
- **Green Space & Recreation:** Safe public playscapes and green spaces where families can picnic, children can safely play, and neighbors can actively interact.
- **Community Wellness:** Integrated health suites for medical, dental, and eye care, alongside dedicated clinical and exercise spaces for physical and occupational therapists.

The decisions made here will shape Midtown for decades. We call upon our City Leaders, the City Planning Commission, and the Common Council to uphold the legal integrity of the Midtown DIZ, reject this deviation, and invest in our neighborhood's families.

Name / Signature		Address	Date/Municipality	Email address /Phone
1.	Print <i>Dorothy Toney</i>	Street <i>3331 N 47 St</i>	Date <i>7/12/26</i>	Email <i>dtoney3331@sbeg/dal.net</i>
	Sign <i>Dorothy Toney</i>	City <i>Milwaukee</i> Zip <i>53216</i>	City <i>Milwaukee</i>	Phone <i>414-550-0052</i>
2.	Print <i>Germa Eggerson</i>	Street <i>8614 W Long Drive #19</i>	Date	Email
	Sign <i>Germa Eggerson</i>	City <i>Milwaukee</i> Zip <i>53225</i>	City	Phone
3.	Print <i>Nodie Williams</i>	Street <i>1535 Rivers Bend</i>	Date <i>7-12-26</i>	Email <i>no</i>
	Sign	City Zip	City	Phone
4.	Print	Street	Date	Email
	Sign	City Zip	City	Phone

Circulator Name/ Signature *Mohamed Tola* Date MM/DD/YY *7/12/26*