

In compliance with the requirements of N.C. Gen. Stat. § 160D-107, the County makes the following statements:

(1) Cryptocurrency mining requires considerable amounts of electricity usage, which can result in greenhouse gas emissions, as well as additional pollution, e-waste, noise, and other local impacts to communities living near the mining facilities. The County is in the process of developing a new Comprehensive Plan which seeks to develop standards and mitigation methods for intensive land uses that may pose detrimental harm to the natural environment, and the County seeks time to develop standards in conjunction with the Buncombe County Planning Board and the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners. The County looked at alternative solutions to a moratorium but found none. The County has determined that to simply allow this intensive land use to be permitted without regard to location, height, size, density, population and type of trade, industry, residence or other purposes would hinder the current and future Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

(2) Buncombe County seeks to specifically define “cryptocurrency mining” as a specific land use, separate and apart from other data centers, and therefore seeks to take action to place a moratorium on the use of property within the unincorporated jurisdiction of Buncombe County for cryptocurrency mining for a time period of one (1) year or until such a time that specific land use standards can be developed. No zoning certification permits pursuant to Code Sec. 78-598 shall be issued for cryptocurrency mining uses in any zoning district during the moratorium. The moratorium will maintain the status quo by limiting any negative effects in neighborhoods impacted by this use until a proper regulatory scheme can be developed.

For the duration of the moratorium cryptocurrency mining is defined as the commercial process by which cryptocurrency transactions are verified and added to the public ledger, known as the block chain, and also the means through which new units of cryptocurrencies are released, through the use of server farms employing data processing equipment. A server farm, as used herein, shall be three or more interconnected computers housed together in a single facility whose primary function is to perform cryptocurrency mining or associated data processing.

(3) The moratorium shall begin on May 2, 2023 and the moratorium shall terminate on May 1, 2024 or upon a text amendment addressing the land use of commercial scale cryptocurrency mining whichever occurs first. This one (1) year moratorium will allow the County to complete its Comprehensive Plan and study what type of zoning districts are appropriate for this type of land use. County staff is directed to study and prepare an amendment to the zoning ordinance regarding cryptocurrency mining prior to the expiration of the moratorium.

(4) Upon the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, Buncombe County Planning Staff will be actively advancing a series of text amendments to the Buncombe County Zoning Ordinance that will seek to mitigate any negative impacts associated with the land use described as cryptocurrency mining prior to the expiration of the moratorium.