UPDATE · FAIRBANKS ORDINANCE 2026-42

A data center, sized like an 800-seat venue.

ILLUSTRATED BUILDING, NO REAL SITE

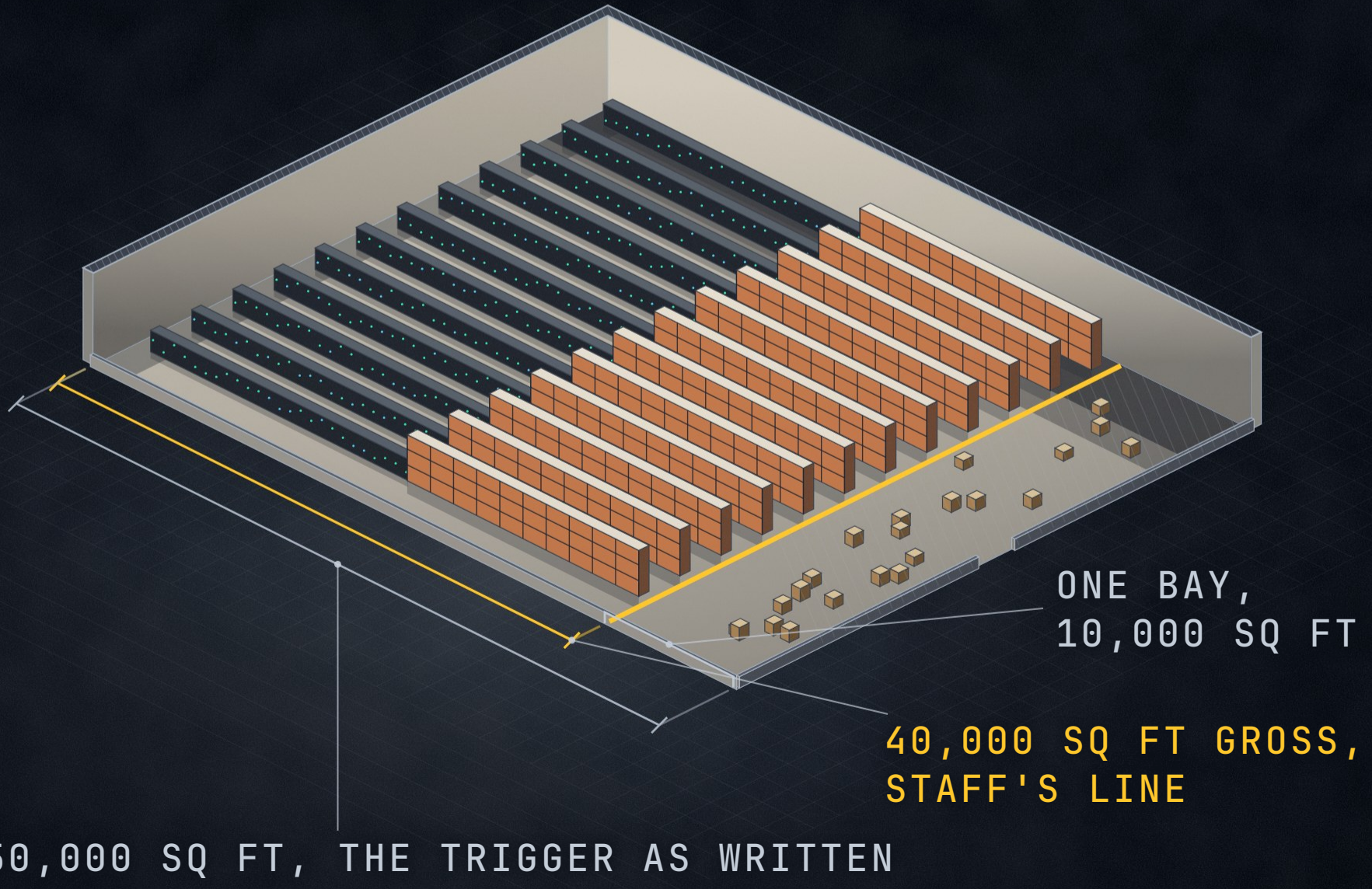


TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10TH, 6 P.M. · PLANNING COMMISSION

Staff back the pause and a 40,000 size line.

Ordinance 2026-42 would bar land use permits for large-scale data centers through December 31st, 2027. Planning staff recommend approval with two amendments. Count gross floor area, and cut the size trigger from 50,000 to 40,000 square feet.

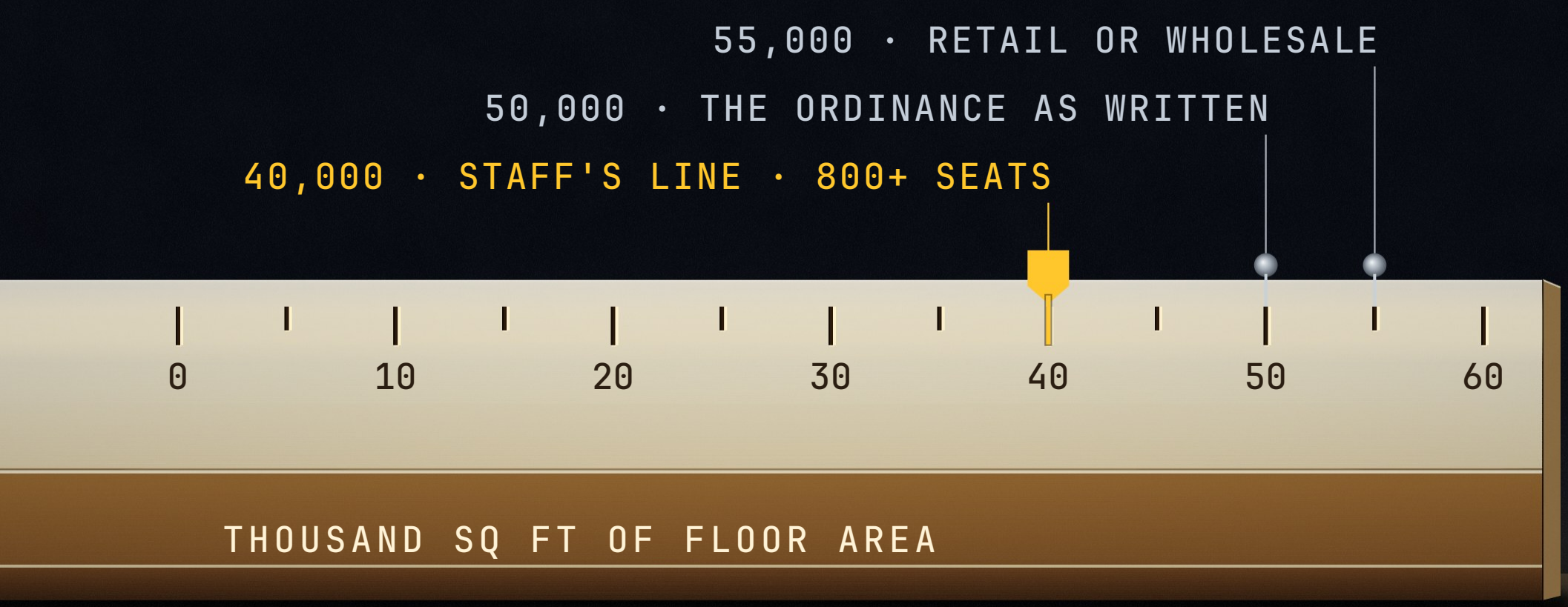
ILLUSTRATED SHELL, NO REAL SITE



WHERE 40,000 COMES FROM

The new line is borrowed from the code's big-venue rule.

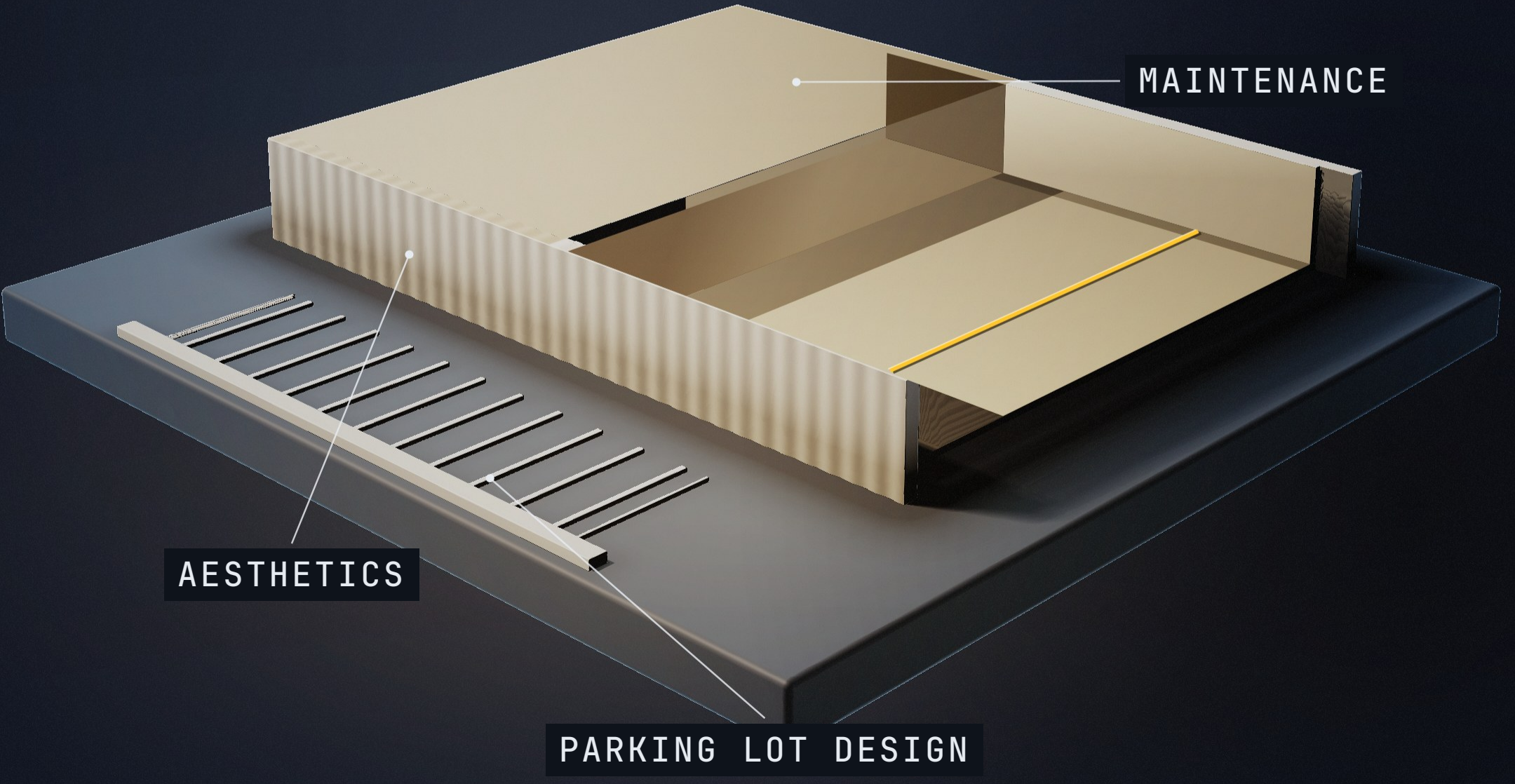
Title 18 already defines large scale development. An entertainment facility counts past 40,000 square feet with 800 or more seats. Staff expect data centers to be similar in size and impact.



WHAT THAT CATEGORY REGULATES

The borrowed rule covers the outside.

Title 18 standards for large scale development address building aesthetics, maintenance and parking lot design. According to the staff report, commenters want rules for water and air quality, power and water supply, noise, vibrations and size.



"Our largest concern is that nobody asked us."

SARAH HOLLISTER, WHO HELPED ORGANIZE AN OCTOBER 29TH FAIRBANKS TOWN HALL ON DATA CENTERS

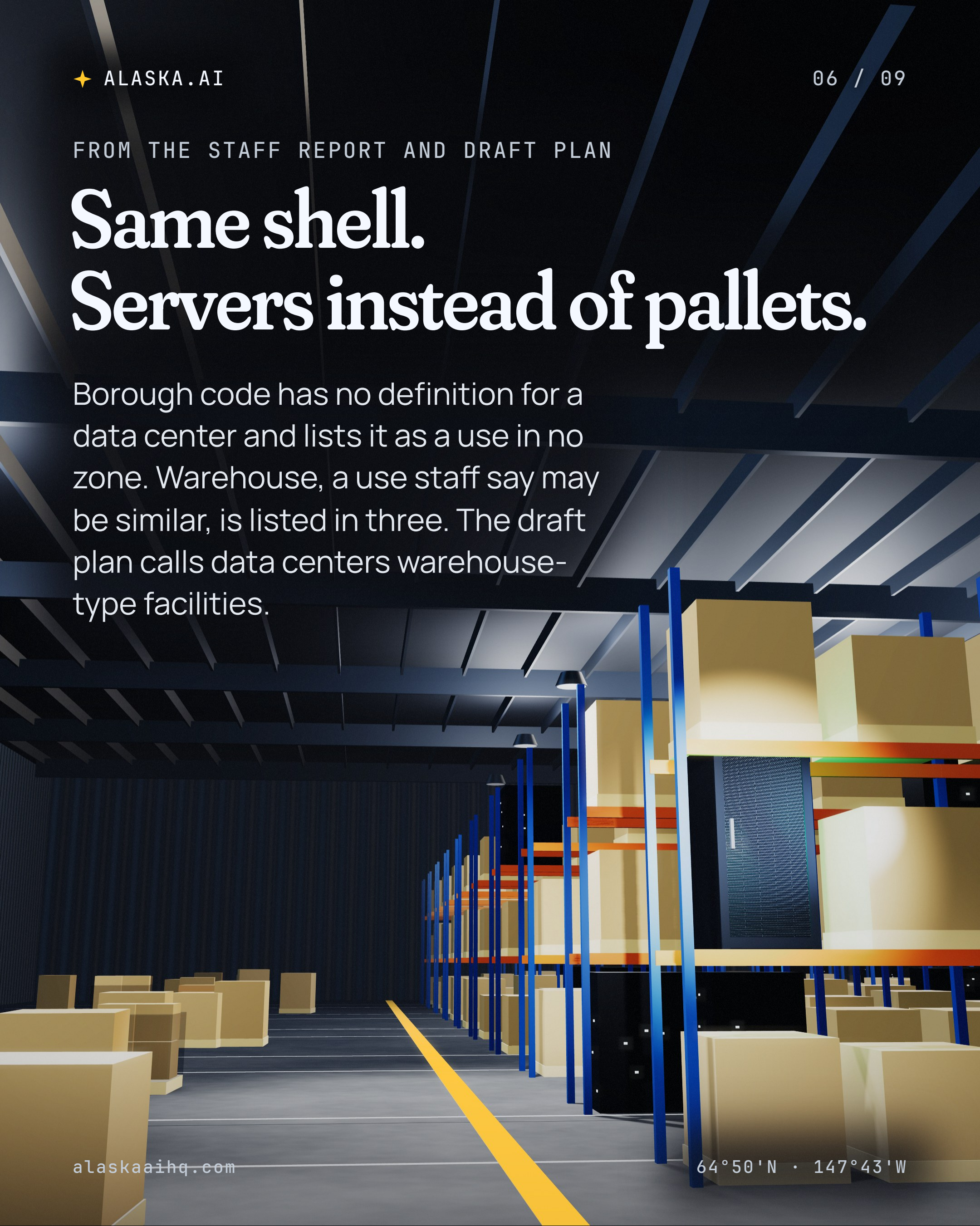
ABOUT 150 CAME, PER ALASKA'S NEWS SOURCE. ORGANIZERS SAY NEARLY 200.



FROM THE STAFF REPORT AND DRAFT PLAN

Same shell. Servers instead of pallets.

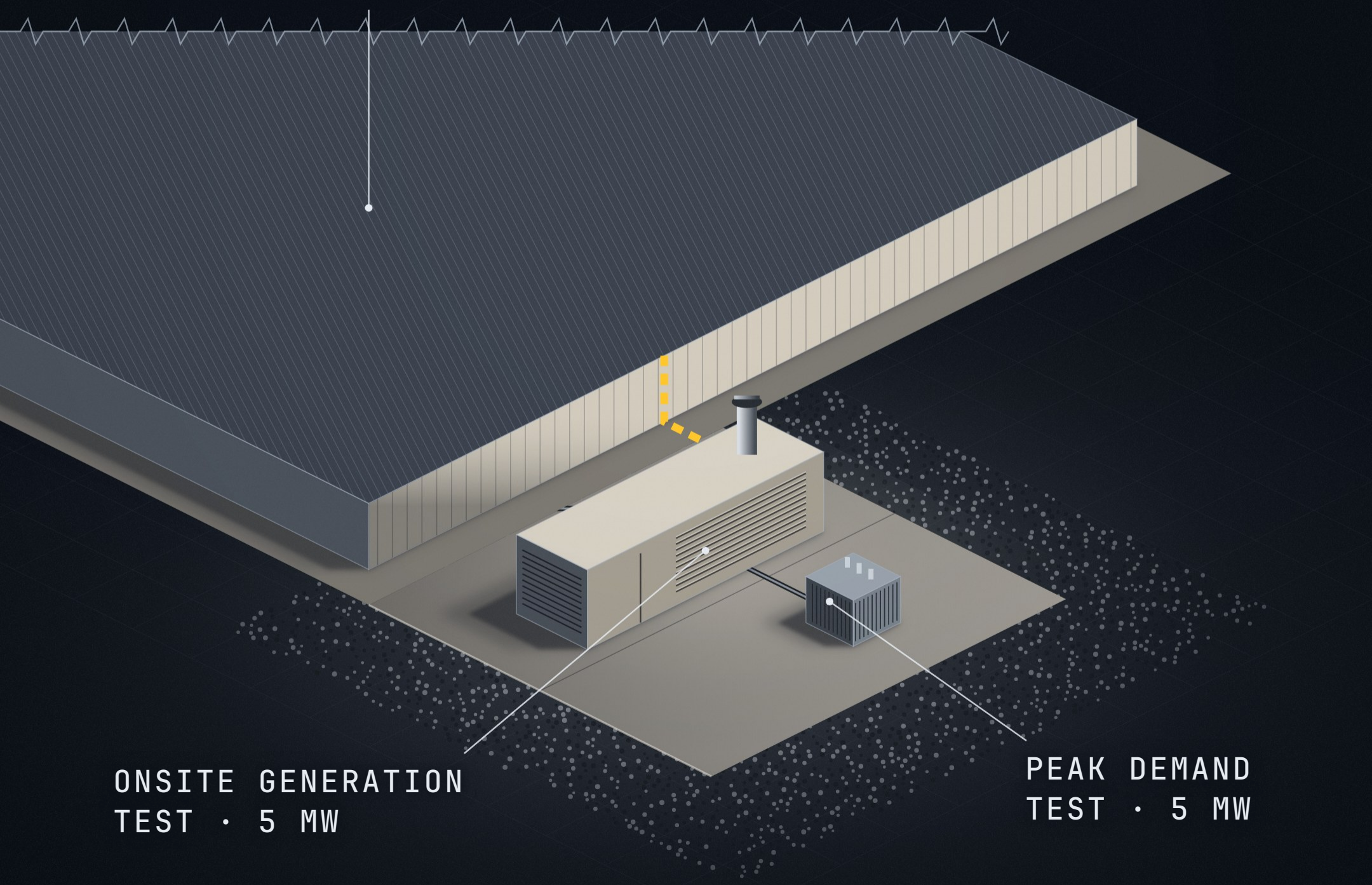
Borough code has no definition for a data center and lists it as a use in no zone. Warehouse, a use staff say may be similar, is listed in three. The draft plan calls data centers warehouse-type facilities.



WHAT THE ORDINANCE ALREADY MEASURES

Two of its three tests measure power.

A data center is large at 5 MW of peak demand, at 5 MW of onsite generation, or past the floor area line. Section 4 orders a study of energy, air, water and noise, due within six months.



AFTER TUESDAY

Tuesday recommends. The Assembly hears it later.

Staff cite a precedent. After the 2014 vote that legalized marijuana facilities, licensing took about 18 months and worked as a de facto moratorium.

NOVEMBER 10TH · COMMISSION HEARS G.3, THEN G.4

WEEKS LATER, USUALLY · ASSEMBLY HEARING, NO DATE SET

DECEMBER 31ST, 2027 · ENDS UNLESS THE ASSEMBLY ACTS

EARLY 2027 · PLAN UPDATE EXPECTED



ONE POCKET, ONE MONTH



2014 PRECEDENT · ABOUT 18 MONTHS, PER STAFF

STUDY · SIX MONTHS FROM THE EFFECTIVE DATE

Square feet or megawatts. Which should decide "large" in Fairbanks?

