

CITIZEN ACTION WORKS

Virginia communities changed data-center rules by organizing, documenting, and staying involved.

1

SHOW UP

Attend hearings, submit written comments, and participate in community surveys.

2

GET ORGANIZED

Coordinate residents, neighborhoods, HOAs, and regional groups around the same facts.

3

BRING EVIDENCE

Use FOIA records, noise measurements, expert review, and documented impacts.

4

STAY ENGAGED

Follow elected officials, agencies, applications, ordinance changes, and enforcement.

The successful campaigns did not rely on one tactic—they combined public participation with evidence.

SHOW UP. ORGANIZE. DOCUMENT. FOLLOW THROUGH.

WHAT CITIZENS CHANGED

The biggest victories changed the rules that govern future projects—not just one application.

BEFORE

- By-right approvals
- Limited public process
- Fewer operating conditions
- Weaker follow-up



AFTER

- Public hearings
- Discretionary permits
- Measurable standards
- More monitoring

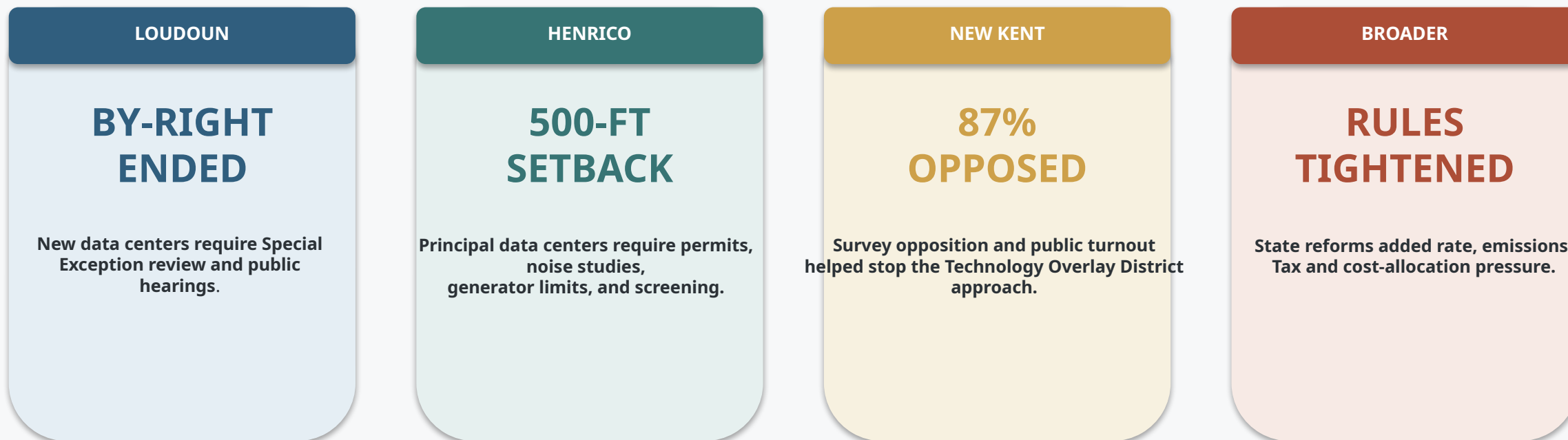
Why it matters: public hearings and permits create opportunities for enforceable conditions and accountability.

CHANGE THE PROCESS. CHANGE THE LEVERAGE.

Source: Successful Citizen Strategies for Data Center Conformance and Compliance, Aug. 2026

REAL VIRGINIA RESULTS

The source document identifies concrete changes in Loudoun, Henrico, New Kent, and statewide.



The common thread: citizen pressure was converted into rules operators must follow.

PUBLIC PRESSURE BECOMES PUBLIC POLICY.

THE CITIZEN 4×4

A simple playbook for residents who want meaningful, fact-based participation.

01

ENGAGE EARLY

Get involved before applications or ordinance language are locked in.

02

BUILD THE RECORD

Save documents. Use FOIA. Measure impacts. Bring credible evidence.

03

FOCUS ON RULES

Push for hearings, permits, measurable standards, and verification.

04

WATCH ENFORCEMENT

A strong ordinance matters only if somebody makes sure it is followed.

The goal is not endless opposition. The goal is transparent rules, measurable standards, and accountability.

FACTS FIRST. ACCOUNTABILITY ALWAYS.