I am writing on behalf of myself, my family, and our concerned neighbours in the Indus, Alberta area to collectively express our **strong opposition** to the proposed BeaconAI data centre and the Indus Power Generation LP thermal power plant. Both projects are planned northwest of the hamlet of Indus, Alberta, within Rocky View County, and in close proximity to our homes, farms, and a local school.

Many of us live within two kilometres of the proposed site, and our children attend school and many residents utilize the nearby recreation facility approximately 3 km away. These projects would directly and negatively affect our families, our water supply, property values, agricultural livelihoods, and the long-term livability and safety of our rural community.

We are directing this open letter to municipal, provincial, and federal representatives because the implications of these proposals extend beyond a single jurisdiction and raise serious **environmental, water, health, social, transportation, and land-use concerns**.

While the BeaconAI lands have been rezoned to **Special – Data Center District (S-DAT)** with an **Area Structure Plan (ASP)** developed specifically for that project, the proposed thermal power plant represents a **significantly higher-impact, non-conforming use** that falls outside the scope and intent of the approved zoning and ASP. Taken together, these proposals represent an unacceptable escalation of industrial intensity in a predominantly agricultural and rural residential area.

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## 1. Precedent-Setting Implications

Approval of either project—and especially approval of a thermal power plant on S-DAT-zoned land—would set a **dangerous precedent** that high-intensity, resource-heavy industrial developments are acceptable adjacent to agricultural lands, rural residences, and schools in Rocky View County.

This precedent would:

- Undermine long-term agricultural land protection objectives;
- Weaken the County's ability to uphold land-use planning principles in future decisions;
- Encourage incremental industrialization without comprehensive cumulative-effects planning;
- Shift long-term environmental, health, infrastructure, and financial risks from proponents onto rural residents.

Once established, this precedent would be extremely difficult to reverse and would shape land-use outcomes far beyond these individual applications.

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## 2. Water Supply, Groundwater, and Local Agriculture

Both the BeaconAI data centre and the proposed thermal power plant are **highly water-intensive operations**, with the thermal power plant requiring substantially greater volumes. In Southern Alberta—an area already facing recurring droughts and water allocation pressure—this level of industrial water demand is deeply concerning.

Groundwater and surface water systems in Rocky View County are **hydrologically connected**. Sustained industrial withdrawals can:

- Lower local water tables;
- Reduce aquifer recharge;
- Interfere with domestic and agricultural wells;
- Increase pumping costs or lead to well failure during dry periods.

Many residents and farmers in this area rely entirely on **private wells**. These risks directly threaten basic water security, agricultural productivity, and the long-term viability of rural living.

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## 3. Water Quality and Pollution Risk

Both facilities pose risks to water quality. Thermal power plants can generate high-temperature wastewater, chemical treatment by-products, and potential heavy metal contamination. Data centres generate cooling-system wastewater containing concentrated minerals and corrosion inhibitors.

In a rural agricultural setting, any leakage, seepage, or improper discharge could compromise:

- Domestic drinking water wells;
- Livestock water supplies;
- Soil quality and crop productivity.

Groundwater contamination is difficult, costly, and often impossible to fully remediate, leaving residents with permanent impacts through no fault of their own.

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## 4. Air Quality, Noise, and Rural Amenity Impacts

The proposed thermal power plant would produce greenhouse gases, nitrogen oxides, sulfur oxides, and particulate matter, affecting human health, livestock, crops, and overall air quality. Both projects would generate continuous industrial noise from cooling systems, ventilation, backup generators, and service traffic.

Experience from similar facilities across Canada and North America shows that:

- Persistent low-frequency noise travels long distances in open rural landscapes;

- Even when regulatory limits are met, constant industrial sound disrupts sleep and daily life;
- Industrial emissions and noise permanently degrade rural quality of life.

These impacts are fundamentally incompatible with the rural character and expectations of the Indus area.

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## 5. Vehicle Traffic, Road Safety, and Infrastructure Impacts

Both developments would significantly increase **industrial vehicle traffic**, including heavy trucks, construction equipment, fuel deliveries, maintenance vehicles, and employee traffic. This increase would:

- Degrade rural roads not designed for sustained heavy industrial use;
- Increase dust, noise, and vibration impacts;
- Raise safety risks for residents, farm equipment, school traffic, and emergency response;
- Create additional danger for children traveling to and from school.

The long-term cost of road damage and safety mitigation would likely fall on the County and taxpayers, rather than the project proponents.

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## 6. Property Values and Financial Impacts to Residents

Numerous studies across North America demonstrate that proximity to large industrial facilities—particularly those involving noise, emissions, traffic, and visual impacts—results in **measurable declines in residential and agricultural property values**.

For area residents, this represents:

- A permanent loss of personal and family equity;
- Reduced ability to sell or refinance properties;
- Financial harm imposed without consent or compensation.

These losses would be borne entirely by residents who had no role in initiating or benefiting from these developments.

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## 7. Economic and Land-Use Impacts

While these projects would permanently consume large areas of land, they would provide **minimal long-term local employment** once operational. In contrast, agricultural land supports ongoing jobs, food production, and local economic resilience.

Collectively, these projects would:

- Reduce agricultural land availability;
- Limit future land-use flexibility;
- Increase pressure for further industrial encroachment.

The result is a **net loss to the rural economy and community sustainability**, with public and environmental costs far outweighing local benefits.

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## 8. Suitability of Alternative Locations

High-intensity facilities such as AI data centres and thermal power plants are more appropriately located in **established industrial areas** with:

- Water and wastewater infrastructure designed for high-volume industrial demand;
- Appropriate industrial buffering;
- Separation from residences, schools, and agricultural land.

Relocating these projects would allow economic and energy development to proceed without sacrificing water security, environmental protection, property values, road safety, or rural livability.

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## 9. Inadequate Public Awareness and Engagement

Many residents in the Indus area were **not aware of, or did not receive notice of, public engagement sessions** related to these proposals until late in the process, or through informal word-of-mouth rather than direct notification. As a result, a significant portion of the affected community was unable to meaningfully participate, ask questions, or raise concerns during early planning stages.

Given the scale, intensity, and long-term consequences of these developments, limited awareness and uneven engagement undermine confidence that the public consultation process has been adequate, inclusive, or representative of community sentiment. Meaningful engagement is particularly critical where private water wells, agricultural land, schools, and rural residences may be affected.

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## Conclusion and Community Request

For all of the reasons outlined above—including **precedent-setting implications, water and groundwater risks, pollution concerns, air and noise impacts, traffic and safety risks, property value loss, non-conforming land use, inadequate public engagement, and negative socio-economic effects**—we, the undersigned residents, are **strongly opposed** to the approval of the BeaconAI data centre and the Indus Power Generation LP thermal power plant in their current locations.

We urge Rocky View County, the Province of Alberta, and federal representatives to fully consider the **cumulative environmental and community impacts** of these proposals, ensure meaningful public participation, and protect long-term water security, agricultural sustainability, road safety, property values, and the health and livability of rural communities.

Thank you for your attention and for your responsibility to protect the interests of current and future residents.

Sincerely,

**Concerned Residents of the Indus Area**

Chris Nikkel
<personal information removed>

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## Appendix A – Key Reference Sources

- Rocky View County Municipal Development Plan (MDP): agricultural land protection, water stewardship, land-use compatibility
- Rocky View County S-DAT zoning and Area Structure Plan (ASP) for BeaconAI data centre
- Alberta Environment and Protected Areas: groundwater–surface water connectivity, drought, industrial water use
- Environment and Climate Change Canada: thermal power plant emissions and air quality impacts
- Canadian environmental advocacy organizations: water, wastewater, air pollution, and community impacts of industrial facilities
- North American case studies: industrial noise, traffic, land-use conflict, property value impacts, and limited local economic benefit

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