



Guntersville's Connors Island Business Park Identified for Data Center Potential

Guntersville, Ala. – Connors Island Business Park in Guntersville has favorable attributes to attract a data center project according to a recent Deloitte Consulting study, an economic development study sponsored by the Tennessee Valley Authority.

TVA and Chicago-based Deloitte Consulting assessed more than 50 sites across the TVA service area for their capacity to accommodate data centers -- specially designed facilities that house computer systems and components for Internet search engine companies, financial transaction processors, and other high-tech industries.

Connors Island was one of 13 sites named as a primary ready-for-development site in the search. The locations were evaluated for accessibility, strong telecommunications infrastructure, electric power availability and reliability, and other characteristics beneficial to data center development.

"Demand for data centers is growing as increased use of electronic commerce and information technologies requires more data storage space," said John Bradley, senior vice president for TVA Economic Development. "There are exceptional opportunities for regional growth potential in this industry. This site has the resources, infrastructure and other qualities needed to support strong data center development."

The 12 sites named are considered ready for development and meet necessary requirements and criteria to support a major data center project. TVA is partnering with local power distributors like North Jackson Electric Co-op (electric utility for Connors Island) plus regional, state and community economic development leaders to market these sites as part of its economic development region's data center project recruitment initiative. Owned by the Guntersville Industrial Development Board, Connors Island is being developed by the City of Guntersville with assistance from the Marshall County Economic Development Council.

"With its close proximity and easy access to all of the technology activity in Huntsville, Connors Island offers a prime strategic location for data center development," said Guntersville Mayor Bob Hembree. "To have an international consulting firm of Deloitte's stature confirm that we meet their demanding criteria adds a significant boost to our marketing efforts."

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Other prospective sites identified in the TVA survey are located in: Athens, Tenn.; Duffield, Va.; Fayetteville, Tenn.; Hartselle, Ala.; Jackson, Tenn.; Lenoir City, Tenn.; Maryville, Tenn.; Murfreesboro, Tenn.; Olive Branch, Miss.; and Tullahoma, Tenn.

“Data centers provide highly-skilled, good-paying job opportunities,” Bradley said. “TVA’s goal is to help make the region more competitive in attracting and retaining these types of industries and the economic benefits associated with them.”

The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), a corporation owned by the U.S. government, provides electricity to large industries and 155 power distributors that serve approximately 9 million consumers in seven southeastern states. Economic development is a major part of TVA’s core mission. TVA’s Economic Development services are focused on attracting targeted new industries, retaining and growing existing businesses and helping communities be better prepared for economic growth. More information is available at http://www.tvaed.com/news/2010/datacenter_development.htm.

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