



METRO ATLANTA

Large data center campus proposed for 53-acre site east of Atlanta

Rockdale project joins roughly 20 data center projects in development or undergoing expansion in North Georgia



Credit: Google Maps

This is a Google Maps screenshot of a proposed data center site in Rockdale County.

By Zachary Hansen

Feb 16, 2024



Less than three months after announcing its first data center project, Rockdale County is poised to land a second massive computer storage farm.

A subsidiary of an [Atlanta-based industrial developer](#) filed state paperwork Thursday for a sprawling data center campus on a 53-acre site near Conyers, roughly 30 minutes east of downtown Atlanta. Strategic Real Estate Partners proposes three warehouses spanning 837,500 square feet at 1975 Sigman Road NW in Rockdale, according to the [Development of Regional Impact \(DRI\)](#) filing.

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Data centers, which are large warehouses filled with computer servers that power our online lives, have become one of the hottest uses for undeveloped real estate in metro Atlanta. The latest Rockdale project joins approximately 20 other data center campuses that are either in development or preparing for sizable expansions across Georgia, mostly near Atlanta. The demand for these facilities [has been described as insatiable](#) by data center developers.



Credit: HYOSUB SHIN / AJC

Aerial photograph shows construction site of DataBank ATL 4, at 200 Selig Drive, Saturday, December 6, 2024, in Atlanta. DataBank operates 5 data centers in metro Atlanta. (Hyosub Shin / Hyosub.Shin@ajc.com)

Massive rows of computer equipment requires lots of electricity to power and water to keep from overheating, which can place strain on utility providers. Georgia Power, the state's largest electric utility, is in the process of asking regulators to approve huge amounts of new capacity — mostly powered by fossil fuels — mainly due to the vast number of electricity-hungry projects across the state.

Georgia Power executives have said data centers are responsible for roughly 80% of the demand crunch it claims to be facing.

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The latest project, which was called Rockdale Technology Park 1, will need to go through local rezoning and is expected to be complete by 2028, according to the DRI. The filing did not include the project's expected build-out value, how many workers it will employ or the anticipated megawattage capacity of the campus. John Young, a principal at Strategic Real Estate Partners, declined to comment.



By Kroger

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DRIs are required for gigantic projects that will affect more than just the city or county where the project is located. The filing was made to the Atlanta Regional Commission, which will vet

the application and analyze how local infrastructure will be affected.

Surging electricity needs

At least eight data center campuses in development or undergoing expansion in North Georgia will have larger power capacities than metro Atlanta's entire data center market in 2019. According to CBRE, metro Atlanta's data center industry combined for 142.6 megawatts in 2019.

Project Name	Location	Developer	MWs
T5 ATL IV	Coweta County	T5	154
DC Blox (Douglas)	Douglas County	DC Blox	180
T5 ATL III	Douglas County	T5	217
Project Excalibur	Fayette County	QTS	250
Edged Atlanta	Fulton County	Edged Energy	180
QTS Atlanta	Fulton County	QTS	278
T5 at Augusta	Richmond County	T5	200
DC Blox (Rockdale)	Rockdale County	DC Blox	216

*This is not a comprehensive list. Some planned data center campuses have not disclosed their anticipated power capacity needs.

Table: Zachary Hansen

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Atlanta-based DC Blox announced the first data center in Rockdale in December, a 750,000 square-foot-campus with a potential capacity of 216 megawatts. The project received local property tax incentives, but the county did not disclose an estimated value.

Kevin Hanna, president and CEO of [Conyers Rockdale Economic Development Council](#), said he has not been approached by Strategic Real Estate Partners regarding local incentives. He said last month that the county's willingness to provide the incentives will lessen as facilities cluster.

"You start out aggressively, and then as you get more and more, the desire for more fades and so the incentives start to fade as well," he said.

Georgia lawmakers recently called for the suspension of a statewide tax exemption for equipment housed within large data centers, often called hyperscale facilities. Lawmakers questioned whether these projects, which strain local power grids, should be incentivized, especially when they employ only a few dozen workers despite their mammoth size.

Explore Georgia lawmakers take aim at film, data center tax breaks

About the Author



Zachary Hansen



Zachary Hansen, a Georgia native, covers economic development and commercial real estate for the AJC. He's been with the newspaper since 2018 and enjoys diving into complex stories that affect people's lives.

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