From the The Business Journal
:http://www.bizjournals.com/triad/blog/2013/11/what-makes-project-haystack-ideal-for.html

Nov 22, 2013, 2:51pm EST Updated: Nov 22, 2013, 3:39pm EST

What makes Project Haystack ideal for data centers?

[Catherine Carlock](#)
  Reporter- *The Business Journal*
  [Email](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Google+](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

At the Guilford County Commissioners work session Thursday afternoon, the team behind Project Haystack repeatedly reiterated the same mantra: the 2,000 acres in eastern Guilford and western Alamance counties are ideal for a data center.

But why? The site is close to five separate fiber-optic cable providers, which these facilities need for the 24/7 transmission and storage of data. An onsite Duke Energy substation could provide abundant power, which, again, data centers would need to stay open and operating 24 hours per day.

But what else makes the 2,000 acres ideal? I caught up with [John Boyd](#), a site consultant with New Jersey-based The Boyd Co. Inc., who has guided clients through the data center site selection process many times before.

He says that the Project Haystack area is on the shortlist of a number of large data-center projects.

"It's a select site because of its size, because of its somewhat remote location, because land costs are very affordable by national standards," Boyd said. "Power, insulation from natural disasters, connectivity — they're three leading factors, and they all show well for that particular site."

Apple, which opened a data center in Maiden in 2012, put North Carolina on the map in terms of mega data centers, Boyd said, adding that there are several large projects actively looking in the Carolinas.

"You're being shortlisted on a number of projects," he said.

Indeed, eastern Guilford County is already home to a massive data center for American Express, with the expectation of [likely hosting a second center](#) for the financial services behemoth.

Boyd says the Internet explosion, the growth of mobile and an increase in federal regulations such

as the Dodd Frank Act and the Affordable Care Act, have led to an ever-increasing need for secure data center operations, particularly in the financial services and medical sectors.

"It's a prudent move on the commissioners' part, because you fish where the fish are, and this is an opportunistic industry," Boyd said.

Catherine Carlock covers commercial and residential real estate, construction, economic development and retailing and restaurants. Contact her at (336) 370-2918.