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Great River Energy announces four data center-ready sites

MAPLE GROVE, Minn. (July 15, 2015) – Great River Energy, Minnesota’s second largest wholesale power provider, has identified four new preferred data center sites within its service territory.

Great River Energy enlisted Deloitte Consulting’s Real Estate & Location Strategy (RE&LS) practice to assist in the creation of a data center site assessment and tiered designation program. Deloitte helped with the establishment of the site evaluation criteria and program parameters based on its extensive industry knowledge and experience working with data center clients.

The evaluation process examined each site’s electric power capacity, high bandwidth fiber availability, proximity and capacity of general utility infrastructure, risk of natural and man-made hazards, as well as zoning and surrounding uses.

Following the evaluation process, sites were either deemed “primary” for meeting or exceeding all program requirements, “secondary” for showing strong potential but requiring additional or updated information or “tertiary” for exhibiting potential challenges.

Great River Energy’s primary, shovel-ready site at Northport Industrial Park in North Mankato offers 38 acres with room for expansion directly adjacent to high-capacity, redundant electric utility and fiber infrastructure. The site has great transportation access and the surrounding uses are all compatible with a data center development.

“BENCO Electric’s Northport Substation has excellent capacity,” said Tom Lambrecht, manager of economic development services for Great River Energy. “All of the infrastructure investments at this site have been designed with end-user scalability in mind.”

The secondary sites available for data center development are:

- Eighth Avenue – I-94 Business Park in St. Cloud, a 23-acre site with multiple fiber optics providers within a mile.
- County Road 75 – I-94 Business Park in St. Cloud, an 80-acre site located a half-mile southeast of the Interstate 94 and Opportunity Drive interchange.
- White Bear Township North Site in White Bear Township, a 42-acre site located off Interstate 35E in the Twin Cities metro area.

All four sites are able to take advantage of the many reasons Minnesota is viewed as a prime location for data center development including state sales tax exemptions; highly-reliable, low-cost energy; and a

currently underserved data center market. The state's colder climate also cuts down on annual cooling costs, one of the largest expenses for data centers.

“Since launching this data center site assessment program in 2014, we have gained a deeper understanding of the needs of the industry,” Lambrecht said. “We look forward to showcasing our designated sites to future partners and allowing them to see why Minnesota is an ideal state for data center development.”

To view in-depth site summaries and photos of each of these certified data center sites, visit econdev.greatriverenergy.com.

About Great River Energy

Great River Energy is a not-for-profit cooperative which provides wholesale electric service to 28 distribution cooperatives in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Those member cooperatives distribute electricity to approximately 655,000 member consumers – or about 1.7 million people. With \$3.9 billion in assets, Great River Energy is the second largest electric power supplier in Minnesota and one of the largest generation and transmission cooperatives in the nation.

Great River Energy's member cooperatives range from those in the outer-ring suburbs of the Twin Cities to the Arrowhead region of Minnesota to the farmland of southwestern Minnesota. Great River Energy's largest distribution cooperative serves more than 125,000 member-consumers; the smallest serves about 2,500. Learn more at greatriverenergy.com.