

# Data center possible at Carolina Mills

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With one data center planned in Maiden with Apple building in town, the area is ripe for a second, officials say.

The old Carolina Mills building, located off North Carolina Avenue in Maiden, is also being marketed as a data center, said Steve Dobbins, president and chief executive officer of Carolina Mills Inc.

"In the long term, we think it will help," he said of Apple building its data center in Maiden.

Dobbins said data centers tend to cluster in areas, like in Quincy, Wash., where Yahoo!, Microsoft and Sabey Corp. have data centers. He said the Unifour area may develop in a similar way, especially with Google's data center in Caldwell County and Apple in Catawba County. That alone should draw the attention of others looking to build data centers in the Catawba County area, Dobbins said.

The vacant Carolina Mills building is well suited for data centers, he said. The property has a 155,000-square-foot building that could be used as a data center and the 106-acre property could support up to five buildings. Dobbins hopes T5 Partners will breath new life into the building. He said the facility has been vacant since the company closed its Maiden plant in 2006.

"We're now even more excited and more set on its use as a data center," Dobbins said.

Since 1928, the building was used for textile manufacturing, including yarn, fabric and gloves. However, Dobbins said the building could be used for any number of purposes.

Dobbins said the company entered into contracts with Atlanta-based T5 Partners to market the Carolina Mills property for use as a data center. The T5 company specializes in data center site selection, leasing and design.

"We believe T5 has the best people we know of working (on the development of) mission critical facilities.

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**Steve Dobbins,**  
Carolina Mills president, CEO

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If they can't do it, no one can."

In fact, Apple also hired T5 Partners to help the company decide where to locate.

Catawba County EDC President Scott Millar said Apple representatives looked at the old Carolina Mills building as a potential site for its data center. The company ultimately decided to locate in the 183-acre WestStar Mission Critical Business Park off Startown Road. Millar said he believes the company wanted more land than the Carolina Mills site had to offer.

"We feel like we were certainly considered and in the running," Dobbins said. "This tells us the site is capable of attracting attention."

Like the WestStar location, Dobbins said the Carolina Mills building has many of the same elements data centers need. Catawba County is deemed an ideal location for data centers due to its close proximity to interstates and the Charlotte airport, high-power capabilities at a low cost and the availability of fiber optic carriers, according to the EDC.

Another data center in Maiden would help boost the town's economy with more jobs and increase the local tax base.

T5 also has the option to buy the property from Carolina Mills, which would help "strengthen the balance sheet of the company," Dobbins said. While he wouldn't discuss the sale price in the contract, the property tax valued is \$569,600, according to Catawba County's Geospatial Information Services.

"Financially, that's not going to make us or break us," Dobbins said.