

Council OKs data center incentives

*By Pat Kimbrough
The High Point Enterprise
October 7, 2020*

HIGH POINT — High Point leaders said a proposed data center for High Point would be another win in the city's efforts to diversify its economy.

The City Council on Wednesday unanimously authorized an incentives deal to persuade DC Blox to develop a data center that could entail a capital investment of \$305 million.

The company will decide whether to undertake the project on the High Point site — on 14 acres at Piedmont Parkway and Sheraton Court in the Piedmont Centre business park — by Jan. 1.

"I'm going to be confident and go ahead and welcome you to High Point," Mayor Jay Wagner told company representatives at Monday's public hearing on the incentives. "Hopefully, that will help to affect your decision-making process."

The project would only create about nine jobs, but would entail the largest capital investment in the local tax base in at least 20 years, according to city economic developers.

The data center would provide space, power, network and operations necessary to run an organization's information technology equipment.

DC Blox Chief Operating Officer Mark Masi said as fewer businesses run their own data centers, the demand for his company's services continues to grow.

"The space needs for (information technology) infrastructure are increasing," Masi said. "This is especially true with demands created during the (coronavirus) pandemic, as people work from home, placing an enormous impact on networks and data centers."

"In 2017, more data was created that year than in all of time up to 2017," he said. "In 2018 to 22, that's expected to again triple."

DC Blox, based in Atlanta, operates data centers in that city, as well as Birmingham and Huntsville, Alabama, Chattanooga, Tennessee, and recently announced that it will establish another one in Greenville, South Carolina.

"We've studied about 40 markets in the Southeast," he said. "We know it's an area of the country, with the exception of Atlanta, Charlotte and perhaps Nashville, which just has a shortage of data centers. These markets are vibrant. These markets are growing. These markets are areas people are moving to, but they lack the technology infrastructure to participate in the new digital economy."

The incentives deal authorized Wednesday would grant the company up to 50% of the city property taxes it pays each year. The Guilford County Board of Commissioners will consider approving the same incentives authorization for DC Blox on Oct. 15.



Proposed DC BLOX High Point Data Center Will Mirror its Birmingham, AL Facility



7

slide from city and county public hearings

County OKs data center incentives

*By Cinde Ingram
The High Point Enterprise
October 15, 2020*

GUILFORD COUNTY — The Guilford County Board of Commissioners voted unanimously Thursday to approve an economic development incentives grant for DC Blox, a technology company considering a \$305 million capital investment in High Point.

The High Point City Council had unanimously approved its share of the incentives deal last week in an effort to persuade DC Blox to develop a data center on a vacant 14-acre site at Sheraton Court and Piedmont Parkway in the Piedmont Centre business park. The High Point location is the only site in the state the company is considering.

Loren Hill, president of the High Point Economic Development Corp., speaking on behalf of the Guilford County Economic Alliance, has said the project dwarfs the next largest project he has seen during his 20 years in High Point.

“We very much appreciate your wonderful attitude and your welcoming of the company,” Hill said after the vote.

The Atlanta-based company is expected to make its decision by the end of the year.