



**Town of Lowndesboro**  
**100 North Broad Street**  
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**(334) 278-3434**

May 21, 2026

The Honorable Robert Harris  
Commissioner, Lowndes County Commission  
District 1  
205 E Tuskeena Street  
Hayneville, AL 36040

Dear Commissioner Harris,

On behalf of myself as Mayor, the Town Council, and citizens of the Town of Lowndesboro, I am writing to formally express opposition to the proposed data center development to be located on the approximately 800-acre tract at the intersection of U.S. Highway 80 and Alabama Highway 21 in Burkeville. As citizens continue to participate in the public hearing process, we respectfully urge the Commission to give full consideration to the testimony and concerns presented by residents, landowners, and community organizations. Lowndesboro is a community of uncommon historical significance. Entered on the National Register of Historic Places on December 12, 1973, our town represents a living piece of Alabama's heritage — a quiet, agrarian, pastoral community whose character has been thoughtfully preserved across generations. It is with that responsibility in mind that we must raise the following serious concerns.

Quite simply, an 800-acre industrial development operating continuously with extensive lighting, mechanical infrastructure, security fencing, and heavy utility construction is fundamentally inconsistent with the rural and cultural environment that defines the Town of Lowndesboro and the surrounding Black Belt communities. Mega industrial data centers of the type proposed require unprecedented infrastructure, including large-scale electrical transmission facilities, tremendous cooling systems, expanded transportation access (far beyond the already over-burdened and dangerous condition of Highway 80) and extensive impervious surfaces. Facilities of this scale consume enormous amounts of water, generate constant and significant levels of mechanical noise, measurably increase air temperatures, introduce extensive nighttime lighting into a previously dark sky landscape, and greatly increase heavy truck traffic on rural roads (such as Highway 21) not designed for or realistically adaptable to sustained industrial use.

**Mayor**  
Edward S. McCurdy, Jr.

**Council**  
Matthew McCurdy  
Connie Blair  
Mark Callis  
Jay Woodall  
Jerry Ingram

**Water Operator**  
Dustin Callis

**Town Clerk**  
LeAnne Bull

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It is also alarming that the proposed site lies within close proximity of the Robert Gardner Farm Campsite, which served as the third overnight campsite of the Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March on March 23, 1965. As you know, U.S. Highway 80 is federally recognized as the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail, a National Scenic Byway and an All-American Road. This corridor is not merely a transportation route, but a nationally significant historic landscape associated with one of the defining events of the American Civil Rights movement. The introduction of a mega industrial-scale data center campus immediately adjacent to this landmark corridor would permanently alter the historic viewshed and rural character that remain central to the interpretation and preservation of the Trail today. We respectfully encourage the Commission to consider the long-term impact this development would have on one of Alabama's most historically significant landscapes and on the national legacy associated with the Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March.

The intersection of Highway 80 and Highway 21 also serves as the center of the Burkeville community which hosts the annual Okra Festival, founded in 2000 and recognized among Alabama's notable cultural events. The festival attracts thousands of visitors annually and celebrates the history, traditions, and identity of this rural community and further supports its growing heritage tourism economy. Environmental impacts such as those noted above will certainly be detrimental to agricultural operations in the area which are so vital to sustaining our communities economically. Local landowners rely on farming as a primary means for supporting their families and have poured years of ongoing investment into their farmland and operations in an effort to secure the future potential for their children and grandchildren to earn a living. Whether landowners rely on row cropping, cattle, poultry or other types of agriculture as a means of generating income, our agriculturally based economy would be diminished by the impacts known to be associated with data center operations.

Hunting, wildlife recreation, and outdoor tourism similarly remain an important part of the local economy and a defining aspect of rural life in Lowndes County. The conversion of hundreds of acres into an industrial campus would fragment habitat, increase noise and disruption, and significantly affect deer, turkey, and other game populations relied upon by neighboring landowners and sportsmen. In addition to broad-based impacts to recreational tourism, one particular concern has been raised regarding an annual school-sponsored deer hunt hosted on private property in this area, which provides meaningful long-term fundraising support for local school and youth programs.

Residents and landowners in this corridor purchased and maintained their property with the reasonable expectation that the surrounding area would remain agricultural, recreational, and rural in character. The scale and intensity of this proposal are incompatible with those long-established land use expectations. This is not a question of opposing economic development. It is a question of appropriate location, proper scale, protection of a nationally significant historic corridor, respect for the character of a

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longstanding rural community, and recognition of the absolute necessity to retain the critical economic backbone of an area firmly rooted in agriculture and progressively benefiting from tourism associated with cultural heritage and natural resources. The adverse impacts resulting to the land, water, crops, cattle, and habitats that anchor our local economy never could be overcome by a few jobs of the nature that might result from locating a data center in this area.

The above concerns surrounding the proposed data center unite historians, civil rights advocates, landowners, farmers, hunters, educators, festival organizers, and families with deep and enduring ties to this area. Therefore, we respectfully urge the Lowndes County Commission to deny approval of this project.

Sincerely,



Edward S. McCurdy, Jr.  
Mayor of Lowndesboro

cc: Chairman Charlie King, Jr.  
Vice Chairman Dickson Farris  
Commissioner Fletcher Hayes  
Commissioner Joseph Barganier