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playoffs

SPORTS, C1



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360, B1

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DATA CENTER FIRM VOWS TO PAY FOR GRID UPDATES



JOHN HART, STATE JOURNAL

Power transmission lines run adjacent to WIBU Road near the site of a proposed data center in the town of Vienna. Under a proposal from QTS Data Centers, the company would cover the cost of new energy transmission infrastructure to meet its massive power demands through the sale of renewable energy credits.

Alliant Energy says current customers won't get stuck with bill to pave way for Dane Co. project

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MADISON — If a proposed \$3 billion data center is built in northern Dane County, Alliant Energy customers won't be on the hook to pay for the electrical generation systems needed to power the massive development, the data center company and Alliant announced Thursday.

The plan announced by QTS Data Centers and Alliant calls for the company to purchase renewable energy credits from the utility, the proceeds of which would fund future expansions of the electrical grid through the construction of solar and wind farms.

Virginia-based QTS also announced it will contribute \$50 million to programs "that strengthen education, workforce development, housing and other critical needs across Dane County" and plans to submit a zoning application to the village

of DeForest in November.

The announcement underscored QTS' intention to ask DeForest to annex the 615 acres envisioned for the project into the village from the town of Vienna. The land is roughly bounded by highways V and DM and WIBU and Patton roads.

"The proposed campus reflects QTS's dedication to the community, investing in both digital infrastructure and the people and programs that strengthen Wisconsin," QTS said in a press release. "Energy and sustainability are central to the approach of QTS. QTS will pay for all project energy infrastructure and there will be no cost impact to existing customers as a result."

Thursday's announcement comes after the Vienna Town Board postponed a planned Oct. 24 meeting with QTS, prompting the company to approach DeForest about annexing the site.

It also comes amid fierce pushback from

local residents. On Thursday, an opposition group, "No Data Center in DeForest," announced it will begin distributing yellow and black yard signs at village meetings. On Wednesday, a Marquette Law School Poll found just over half of Wisconsinans, on both sides of the political aisle, say the benefits from building data centers on vast acreages of land aren't worth the cost.

Data centers provide businesses with computing capacity without requiring those businesses to invest in the physical facilities needed to store and maintain computer servers, which require vast amounts of power and cooling systems. The explosion in artificial intelligence has increased the demand for server capacity, leading to a corresponding boom in data center construction.

Please see **QTS**, Page A3

Madison College announces \$4.5M gift for scholarships

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MADISON — W. Jerome Frautschi has gifted \$4.5 million to the Madison College Foundation, the largest donation to the nonprofit ever outside of capital campaigns.

Madison Area Technical College, also known as Madison College, plans to use the fund to expand scholarship opportunities

for students.

In 2022, the Frautschi Family Pathway Scholarship Fund was established with a \$1 million gift toward the Smart Future Scholarship Fund, which supports low-income students.

MATC President Jennifer Berne said in a statement Monday that the gift will bring more scholarships to students and removes the upfront costs that can hinder some-

one's choice to advance their education.

"These barriers are rarely one-time events, so to have a scholarship that recognizes and responds to that reality is essential — and quite literally life-changing," Berne said.

The Frautschi fund has supported 187 MATC students since it launched. In the last year, the Madison College Foundation awarded 2,300 students with scholarships.

"Madison College has been an invaluable asset to our community for over 100 years, educating our parents, siblings, and children. We fully support its mission to enhance the lives of residents," Frautschi said in a statement Monday. "We wish success for those who will benefit from the fund, knowing that the pursuit of higher education, combined with hard work, leads to a fulfilling life."

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COMICS	D3,D5	OBITUARIES	None	STATE	A4

