



Former 3M site will continue to be R&D site, not a data center

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Four Points News

SB Energy has purchased the former 3M site on River Place Boulevard and it will remain a research and development site, according to filings. It will not be a large data center like SB Energy has built less than 100 miles from Austin.

“The Highpoint site, now called COSMOS, will not be a large-scale data center, it is an R&D lab. This was confirmed by SB Energy on our 4/20/26 call and is evident in their site filings made with the City of Austin,” shared Tom Smith, president 2222 Coalition of Neighborhood Associations on a Nextdoor post on April 23.

SE COSMOS LLC purchased the Highpoint 2222 property at 6801 River Place Blvd. about five weeks ago on March 20 from Karlin Real Estate. SE COSMOS is a Delaware corporation that was formed for this transaction per the special warranty deed. SE COSMOS is a subsidiary of SB Energy, a large-scale digital infrastructure company. It is preparing the local site for a

tenant.

“We can’t share the customer right now. We will be able to in a few months from now,” shared the SB Energy spokesperson.

She said right now they are understanding what the priorities of the tenant are. “We are currently going through the planning, design and financing process.”

At this time, SB Energy is “not planning to go beyond the footprint” of the former 3M site. The campus has 1.2 million-square-feet what 3M used as office and laboratory space. It sits on 156-acres and has been empty since 2019.

“I think we need to get more information,” said Linda Bailey, president of the Lake Austin Collective. “There’s a lot of concern about the secrecy of their plans. Once that’s settled, it could be a big benefit.”

The Lake Austin Collective is a local nonprofit organization that advocates for and empowers area neighborhoods including Shepherd Mountain, Courtyard, Glenlake, and Greenshores.

Bailey said she has heard from upwards of 75 people who

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think the site will be a data center. Many are speculating about this due to research that shows what SB Energy has done at their other site where they have built data centers.

She shares with those concerned individuals that so far the site is only permitted as an R&D center. "But I get a lot of concern," she added.

"We want to know who the tenant or tenants are. We don't know why so much secrecy," Bailey said.

"We want to know: How many people will work there; what the traffic impact is going to be; if they're going to build a multi-use (with residential) or not; whether LISD buses can go through," Bailey said. "If those are resolved, it seems like a very positive approach."

Similarly 2222 CONA has many unanswered questions, according to Smith's post, including "water usage, project timing, number of tenants, and how many people will occupy the site, and other topics."

"There are many details that are still unknown and yet to be verified by SB Energy," he added in his posted.

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The parking garage has been torn down in the last couple of weeks. Bailey wants to know why that is taking place and wonders if they are going to rebuild on that pad a structure for computers.

SB Energy, which is backed by Japan-based SoftBank Group Corp., and is tied to multiple large data center and energy-related projects in Texas for the past six years. SB Energy is also in Milam County, located northeast of Austin, where it has:

- A data center campus is planned about 70 miles north-east of Austin, in partnership with OpenAI
- The Orion Solar Belt, a solar energy project also in Milam County, is also associated with SB Energy.

The spokesperson indicated that SB Energy wants to connect with local stakeholders in the Four Points area. They have had discussions with the office of Rep. Vikki Goodwin, Texas House District 47 and have started to talk to community associations.

The head of community engagement is starting to spend time in the Austin area and getting to know people, she added. "We tend to do open houses and plan on doing those in the coming months."

"To give a sense of who we are, a big focus for us is community engagement. We like to spend time on the ground getting to know people," the spokesperson shared.

In Milam County, for example, the company has invested in roads and local schools. It also contributed \$60,000 to keep a transportation service running that helps the elderly and low income individuals.

"We want to understand what is a high priority for a community itself," she said, and indicates that is what they want to do in Four Points as well.

More details on energy usage

Tom Smith, president 2222 Coalition of Neighborhood Associations, posted important details about energy usage at the former 3M site on a Nextdoor on April 23:

The site Development filings are under Case "2026-009760 PR" which has supporting documents including one titled "Electrical Record Set" which details what will be built on the site and how much power will be used. The power layout in the Electrical Record Set specifies an R&D lab of approximately 5MW — not a large-scale data center. The rooms on the plans are named Firmware Lab, Thermal Chamber, Rack Lab, and Machine Shop which match exactly what would be needed for an R&D Lab doing AI Chip design and testing. By contrast, a typical large scale Data Center (like those being built as part of the Stargate AI initiative) consume 100's of Megawatts and sometimes multiple Gigawatts of power. This site will consume closer to 5-45MW even with future expansion plans. To further confirm the R&D Lab planned usage, there has been no request to Austin Energy for a new substation or Permits for a new substation issued. The power will come from the existing power lines near the site and will run through onsite transformers to feed into the newly renovated Lab spaces. There is an onsite generator building that was built by 3M, and although it has not been confirmed by SB Energy, we suspect that will be updated and used as a backup power supply in the case that the power grid goes down.