

People



## James W. Grice

Co-Chair, Energy and Infrastructure Sector Team

Dallas \*

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James Grice focuses his practice on general commercial real estate, primarily representing investors, developers, operators, and users in the data center and digital infrastructure realm. Jim has distinguished himself in the data center and renewable energy sector where he utilizes his intimate understanding of project finance and experience with tax incentives to help clients structure deals to their best advantage. Jim regularly works with clients on standalone data center asset purchases and divestitures, including campus acquisitions, acquisition of sites to be redeveloped as data centers, and sale and leasebacks of data center assets. His transactional work is focused on mergers and other acquisitions and dispositions of businesses and related assets, joint ventures and other methods of combining business operations. He also has experience with spin-offs, split-offs, carve-outs, and other methods of restructuring the ownership of business operations.

Jim has significant experience in advising companies on the legal complexities associated with all aspects of data center operations, leasing, subleasing, co-location and related services. This includes experience advising on the related service level maintenance agreements and assisting with data privacy policies and various user agreements. He has advised developers, operators and investors on data center development projects, including land purchase and sale agreements, planning and environmental issues, power purchase arrangements and contracting for the design and construction of data centers. Jim is also a go-to-resource for data center tax issues, development incentives for data centers, and legislative issues associated with taxes on data center construction and operation.

In addition, Jim's practice includes telecommunication and energy solutions experience, having handled some of the most important issues associated with network connectivity, whether related to issues involving local exchange carriers (LECs), competitive local exchange carriers (CLECs), wireless providers, and broadband companies or cable companies. He is also active in assisting clients with renewable and alternative energy project development,

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### Areas of Experience

Real Estate  
Data Centers and Digital Infrastructure  
Renewable Energy and Electric Power  
Energy and Infrastructure  
Commercial Leasing and Development  
Real Estate Acquisitions and Sales  
Real Property Tax Planning and Appeals  
Environment and Natural Resources  
Technology Transactions  
Economic Development and Incentives  
Corporate Finance and Lending

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### Education

J.D., University of Missouri–Kansas City, 1993  
B.S., William Jewell College, 1988

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### Admissions

#### Bars

Kansas  
Missouri  
Texas

#### Courts

U.S. District Court, Western District of Missouri  
U.S. District Court, District of Kansas

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### Related Content

James Grice to Moderate Panel at DICE National  
May 20, 2025

Akerman Sponsors the Solar + Wind Finance & Investment Summit  
March 17, 2025

*Wall Street Journal* Quotes Jim Grice on AI Data Center Boom  
February 28, 2025

financing and operations, including most forms of renewable energy. He routinely represents clients in analyzing project feasibility, structuring project ownership, project financing, and project development.

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Location

\*Non-resident

Within the past 3-4 years, Jim has assisted various clients with the following:

- Significant hyperscale experience having worked across the table with numerous hyperscale users to negotiate leases, joint ventures, and build-to-suit arrangements
- Data center lease transactions involving more than a Gigawatt (1000MW)
- Data center development projects with total project value of over \$35 billion
- Data center transactions with aggregate transaction value of more than \$5 billion
- Data Center tax incentives with aggregate value of more than \$3 billion
- More than 12 separate data center enterprise divestiture transactions involving more than 18 locations in the U.S. and Europe
- Special contract arrangements, special tariffs or enhanced power procurement arrangements for more than 100MW

## Notable Work

### Data Center Transactions:

- Assisted Mapletree with the portfolio purchase of 29 data centers from Sila Realty Trust, a transaction valued at approximately \$1.3 billion.
- Assisted Macquarie Capital USA with its strategic stock investment in Prime Data Centers.
- Assisted Landmark Dividend with various transactions to purchase and sell data center properties throughout the U.S. and Canada.
- Assisted Chirisa Capital Management with the acquisition of a 20+ acre facility to be developed into a 30+ MW data center.
- Represented large bank in a data center divestiture including negotiation of a multi building 8+ MW sale/lease back.

### Data Center Development:

- Assisted a short list of confidential clients with delivery of data center campuses intended for proprietary use and master planned for 350+ MW. Projects of this scale require use of Jim's core competencies associated with real estate acquisition and related diligence, grid power procurement, renewable energy procurement and/or facility development, sustainability, telecom provisioning, construction, project finance, and state and local tax incentives.
- Assisted Digital Realty with incentive negotiations and power procurement negotiations related to a 60+ acre data center campus development in Texas that is planned to accommodate more than one million sq. ft.
- Assisted Digital Realty with seeking approval for incentives and condo platting issues associated with an \$80 million urban data center project redevelopment in the Midwest.

- Assisted developer with development issues on a 350-acre master planned campus in the Midwest to accommodate the needs of large-scale enterprise data centers. The project involved power delivery arrangement for 100MW of utility power at a high voltage rate.

#### **Data Center Leasing:**

- Assisted various clients in connection with hyperscale and other corporate colo leasing deals across North America and Europe including, among others: a 220+ MW campus in Texas; 200+ MW campus in Virginia; 70+ MW building in Virginia; 45+ MW building in Canada; 45+ MW building in Texas; 35+ MW building in Virginia; 15+ MW building in California; a 15+ MW building in Illinois, 5+ MW building in Israel.

#### **Data Center Tax Incentives:**

- Developed legislation that enhances data center operations in Arizona and led the effort to seek passage.
- Developing legislation that enhances co-location data center operation in Texas and is leading the effort to seek passage.
- Assisted approximately 10 data center owners and operators with certification of approximately 65 MW of space in Arizona to benefit from the new Arizona CDC program.
- Assisted data center client to obtain tenant-based certification under the new data center incentive program in Texas.
- Assisted multiple data center clients with making a private letter ruling request in Texas to clarify certain state tax issues that impact the client's data center operations in that state.

#### **Power for Data Centers and Telecommunications:**

- Assisted with negotiation of special contract arrangements, special tariffs or enhanced power procurement arrangements for large data center campus deployments globally.
- Supported data center client negotiations for power procurement strategy at numerous locations through upper and lower Midwest.
- Assisted telecommunications client with negotiation of more than a dozen local franchise agreements to access public right of way to install new fiber.
- Assisting Vertical Bridge, a large cell tower developer, on permits and approvals associated with national buildout of 200+ tower locations.
- Assisted real estate client with negotiation of agreements associated with deployment of micro cell wireless technology on roof tops and location of cell towers on excess land.
- Assisted telecommunications CLEC client with negotiation of more than a dozen local franchise agreements to access public right of way to install new fiber.
- Assisted a fiber to the home provider to with various access agreements and taxing arrangement in various jurisdictions in California.

#### **Energy, Renewables, and Oil and Gas:**

- Assisted an oil pipeline operator with strategy development for state siting authority and permitting for petroleum pipelines in

Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, Missouri, Kansas, and Illinois.

- Assisted an oil pipeline operator with development of Presidential Permit strategy to cross the international border with petroleum pipeline and development of a federal permitting strategy for construction of petroleum pipeline to cross various multiple states.
- Assisted energy developer with project financing for biomass and organic fertilizer facility in the Midwest including assistance with tax credit financing utilizing the renewable energy investments tax credits (ITC's).
- Assisted energy developer with project finance structure and permitting strategy for redevelopment of 45 MW decommissioned coal fired power plant to use biomass solid fuel utilizing next generation coop structure and state-based investment tax credits.
- Assisted various clients with approximately 125 MW of solar facility projects. Jim's involvement with such projects included issues related to development and permitting, FERC regulation, electrical power agreements (PPAs) and master lease agreements, interconnection agreements, net metering, renewable energy investment tax credits (ITC) and monetization, and renewable energy credits (REC) and monetization.
- 100 MW Multi-Site deployment of roof top solar across more than twelve jurisdictions for a major big box retailer.
  - 4 MW rooftop and 22MW offsite solar deployment with two New Jersey Housing Authorities.
  - 3MW solar system deployment with Missouri municipality.
  - 6MW solar system deployment with Texas County.
  - 2MW solar system deployment with Massachusetts municipality.
  - 6 MW solar system deployment with Massachusetts school district.
  - 2MW solar system deployment with Maryland municipality.
  - 5 MW solar system deployment with New Mexico prison facility.
  - Solar system deployment on behalf of a Missouri corporation with a solar developer.
  - Representation of a solar site developer negotiating with Wal-Mart for solar development rights.
  - Representation of solar developers in developing form documents and negotiating deal points.

#### **Commercial Development, Infrastructure Finance and P3:**

- Assisted various agencies of Kansas City, Missouri (i.e. KC Tax Increment Financing Commission and the Planned Industrial Expansion Authority) with more than 85 different large scale development projects throughout Kansas City, Missouri.
- Assisted developer with \$115 million redevelopment of iconic office building in Kansas City including assistance with all transactional documents (i.e. purchase and sale agreement and commercial leases) along with property tax abatement and historic rehabilitation tax credit financing.
- Assisted developer with 1 million sq. ft retail development in Branson, Mo. Worked to devise purchase/ incentive structure and negotiations to secure \$50 million in tax increment financing,

along with assistance of transaction documentation for development, lease up and sale of the project.

- Assisted developer to devise a \$900 million redevelopment financing strategy for a proposed downtown arena and associated entertainment district in Las Vegas NV.
- Assisted various private development interests with dozens of other retail and commercial developments undertaken throughout the Midwest.

## Published Work and Lectures

- 2025 Solar + Wind Finance & Investment Summit, Speaker, “The Economics of Demand: Data Centers & Load Growth,” March 17, 2025
- 24th Annual Metro Connect USA Conference, Speaker, “Where and How Can We Meet the Demand for Data Centres?” February 24, 2025
- Information Management Network (IMN) Data Center and Private Equity Dealmakers Forum, Moderator, “If AI & Power are #1 and #2, What Else is on Top of the List?” February 6, 2025
- 2024 DICE West Conference, Moderator, “Fireside Chat: Up-Close with Primary Digital Infrastructure,” December 3, 2024
- 7x24 Exchange Midwest Chapter, “Data Center Market Outlook: Current Trends and Vision for the Future,” October 10, 2024
- Yotta 2024, Speaker, “Looking for the Capital to Grow; Is It All About AI Now?” October 8, 2024
- DCD Connect Investment Forum, Speaker, “Keynote Market Horizon: Trends, Recent Moves on the Map, Future Investments in Data Center Industry and Akerman’s Vision for the Future,” September 25, 2024
- 2024 Datacloud USA, Moderator, “Overcoming Challenges Amidst the Macroeconomic Environment,” September 18, 2024
- 2024 DICE South Conference, Moderator, “From Cryptocurrency to AI: How are Crypto Mining Facilities Supporting the Need for AI Compute,” August 7, 2024
- 2024 DICE East Conference, Moderator, “Deep dive strategy road map: A look at where the industry is headed and what AI means for the evolution of the global digital economy,” May 23, 2024
- Metro Connect USA Annual Conference, Moderator, “What will it take to deliver the data centre of the future today?” February 26, 2024
- Pacific Telecommunications Council (PTC) Annual Conference, Speaker, “Legal/Regulatory Topical Session,” January 22, 2024
- 2023 Datacloud USA, Moderator, “Breaking Ground: How do we navigate the opportunities and challenges of emerging data center markets?” September 11, 2023
- 2023 DICE South Conference, Moderator, “Location, Location, Server Location: Navigating Data Center Development and Where to Build Next,” August 2, 2023
- 2023 DICE East Conference, Moderator, “State of the Northern Virginia Market: How Are The Dynamics Changing In The World’s Largest Data Center Market And What Are The Ripple Effects Across Tier 2 and 3 Markets?” May 24, 2023
- 2023 Datacloud Global Congress, Moderator, “Keynote Panel: How do we Improve the Public Perception of the Data Centre Industry?” April 27, 2023
- The Nomad Futurist Podcast, Speaker, “The Legal Side of Tech,” March 6, 2023



- 22nd Annual Metro Connect USA Conference, Moderator, “Are ESG Investments a Win-Win?” January 31, 2023
- 2023 PTC Annual Conference, Panelist, “Data Centers,” January 16, 2023
- 2022 DICE South Conference, Moderator, “State of the Southern Market: Has Growth Been Accounted For? Or Will Momentum Continue?” October 20, 2022
- *The American Lawyer*, Featured, “Akerman Debuts Data Center and Digital Infrastructure Practice,” July 7, 2022
- Moderator, “Anatomy of a Data Breach and Emerging Strategies to Manage Risk,” June 2016
- IMN Provider Forum on Data Center & Cloud Services Infrastructure, Moderator, “Financing Growth: Today’s Debt/Equity Options for Data Center/Colocation/Cloud Service Providers,” June 2016
- Kansas City Institute of Internal Auditors, Moderator, “Anatomy of a Data Breach,” May 2016
- Moderator, Panel on Emerging Security Strategies to Effectively Manage the Risk of a Data Breach, February 2016
- DataCenters Dynamics Converged, Moderator, “If Platform Requirements Drive Infrastructure Decisions, Does It Matter Who Owns It?” March 2015
- The Fifth Annual Forum on Investing & Real Estate Development for Data Centers by IMN, Speaker, “Site Selection 2015: What are the Key Factors?” November 2014
- The Second Annual Texas Data Center Summit, Moderator, “Texas Legislative Update Including Analysis of Tax Incentives & Strategies for Owners: Proactive Steps and Strategies for Developers & Investors/Operators,” October 2014
- Arizona Data Center Coalition, Speaker, “A Summary of the Arizona Rulemaking Process and Key Issues for the Industry,” October 2014
- The Third Annual Greater Chicago and Midwest Data Center Summit, Speaker, “Analysis of Tax Incentives & Strategies for Owners/Operators: Steps to Avoid the Property Tax Burden While Repurposing or Expanding a Data Center and Analysis of New Illinois Sales Tax Incentives for Operators,” June 2014
- Digital Realty, Speaker, “Executive Roundtable to Discuss Advantages of New Arizona CDC Program,” June 2014
- Uptime Symposium 2014, The Uptime Institute, Speaker, “The New Rules of Data Center Site Selection,” May 2014
- 7x24 Exchange SoCal Chapter Meeting, Speaker, “Data Center Tax Incentive\$, What\$ the Big Deal?” May 2014
- The Third Annual Northern California Data Center Summit, Speaker, “Proactive Steps to Avoid the Property Tax Burden While Repurposing or Expanding a Data Center,” April 2014
- Phoenix Chamber of Commerce Board Retreat, Speaker, “Technology Issues, Industry Update: Financial Services & Insurance in Arizona,” January 2014

## Honors and Distinctions

- *Best Lawyers*, 2024-2025, Listed in Texas for Real Estate Law
- *The Legal 500*, 2024, Recommended for Real Estate - Real Estate
- *Connect CRE*, 2023 Lawyer in Real Estate Award Winner, Texas