WELCOME

Commonwealth Regional Council

Data Center Educational Workshop

In Partnership with

HURT & PROFFITT

EDUCATIONAL SPEAKER

Economic Development + Data Center 101



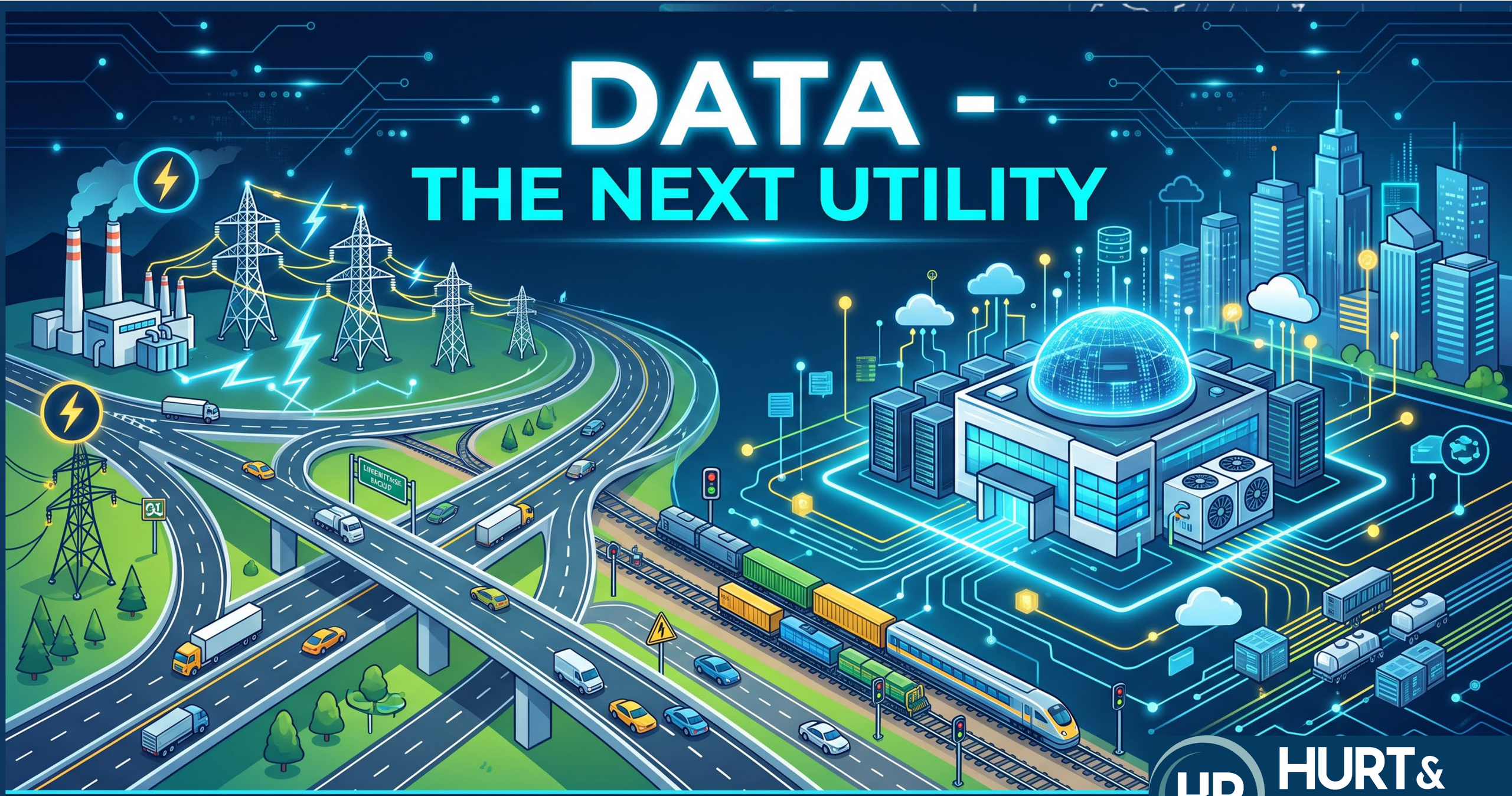
TIM REYNOLDS, PE

VP of Business Dev - H&P

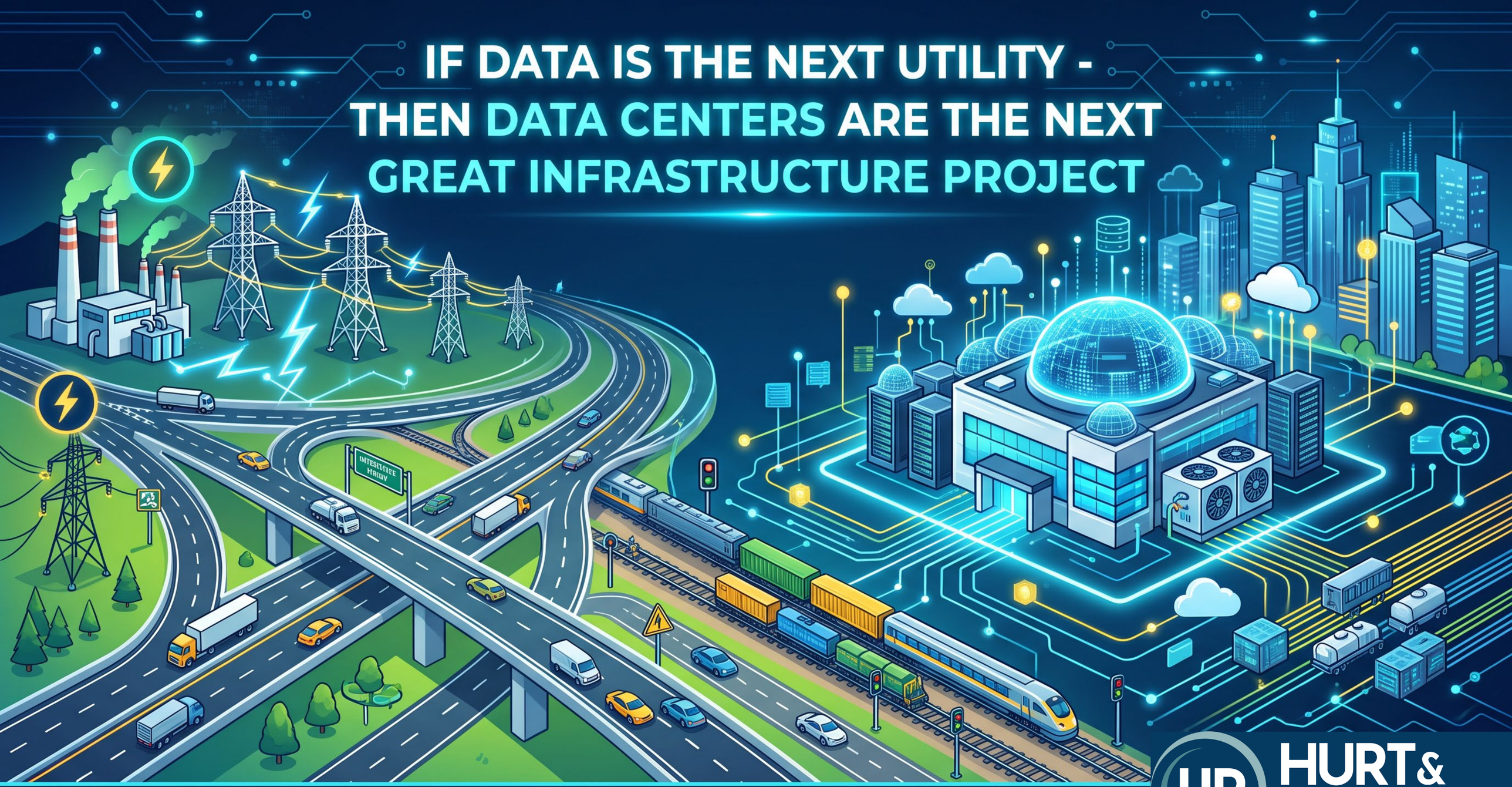
-32+ Years of Civil Engineering Experience in Land, Water, & Transportation in Rural Virginia

COMMONWEALTH REGIONAL COUNCIL
DISTRICT 14
VIRGINIA'S HEARTLAND

HURT & PROFFITT

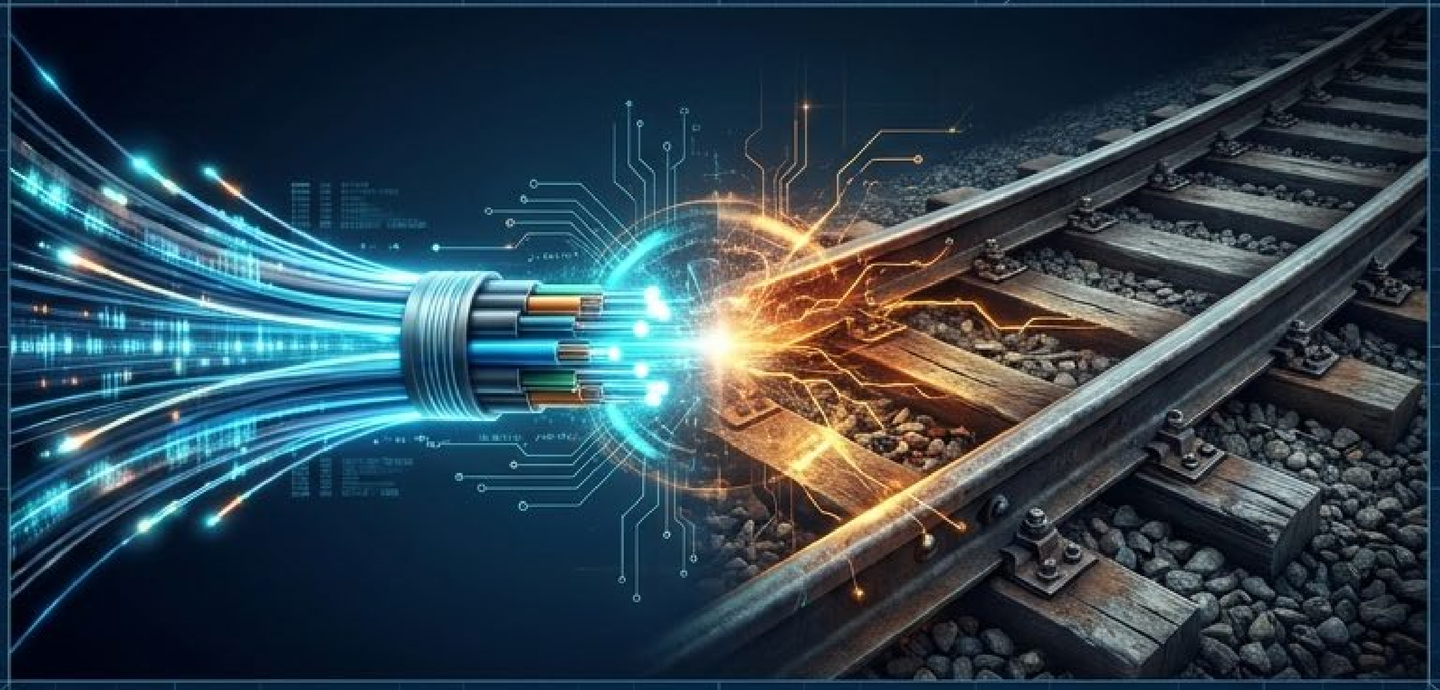

DATA -
THE NEXT UTILITY
Leveraging Digital Infrastructure for a Connected Future
HURT & PROFFITT

IF DATA IS THE NEXT UTILITY - THEN DATA CENTERS ARE THE NEXT GREAT INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT



Leveraging Digital Infrastructure for a Connected Future

HURT & PROFFITT



The Architecture of Anxiety

Tracing the Historical Parallels of Technological Disruption—From the Printing Press to Modern AI

Gemini Notebook



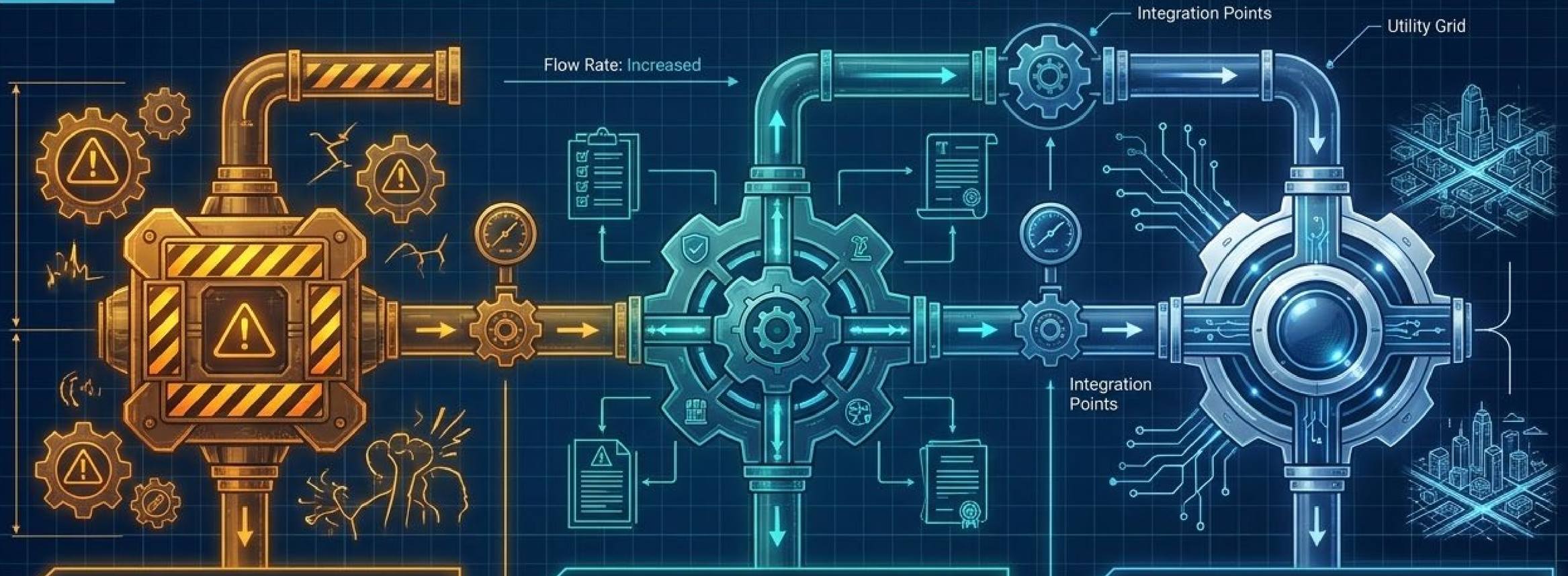
Every foundational shift triggers identical societal friction.

Whether it is communications, transportation, or power, major infrastructure disruptions consistently trigger deep anxiety regarding biological safety, economic obsolescence, and moral decay.

To understand the modern market forces and fears surrounding Artificial Intelligence and Data Center buildouts, we must first look at the blueprints of the past.

Gemini Notebook

The Mechanics of Technological Adoption



Phase 1: Rejection & Panic

Technology is framed as an existential, biological, or moral hazard. Rumors dominate public discourse.

Phase 2: Regulation & Adaptation

Society establishes safety standards, building codes, and institutional frameworks to tame the machine.

Phase 3: Ubiquitous Infrastructure

The technology becomes an invisible, indispensable utility taken entirely for granted by subsequent generations.

Gemini Notebook



@MasterScribe_1440

Why memorize when you can print? This cheap movable type is ruining critical thinking! Information pollution is everywhere. #SupportOurScribes #BanThePress

The Reality: Loss of Gatekeeping

In 1471, scholars like Niccolò Perotti lamented that print flooded the market with vulgarity and error. Authorities feared the bypass of ecclesiastical oversight, while scribes intentionally manufactured panic over ‘cognitive atrophy’ to protect their artisan monopolies from obsolescence.

Gemini Notebook



@Plowman_Jeb

Do not board! The mechanical vibration at 20 mph causes vertigo vertigo and brain concussions. Plus, the smoke has completely dried up my cattle's milk! #StopTheSteam

The Reality: Physiological Terrors

'Railway Madness,' asphyxiation, and 'Railway Spine' were widely accepted medical terrors in the 1830s. Farmers feared stray sparks and miscarriages in livestock. Meanwhile, stagecoach networks and canal operators fiercely lobbied against rail charters to prevent their own economic demise.

Gemini Notebook



@SafetyCitizen_1928

Safety Tip: Always leave burned-out bulbs in empty light sockets so the electricity doesn't leak out onto your floors! #LeakingPower

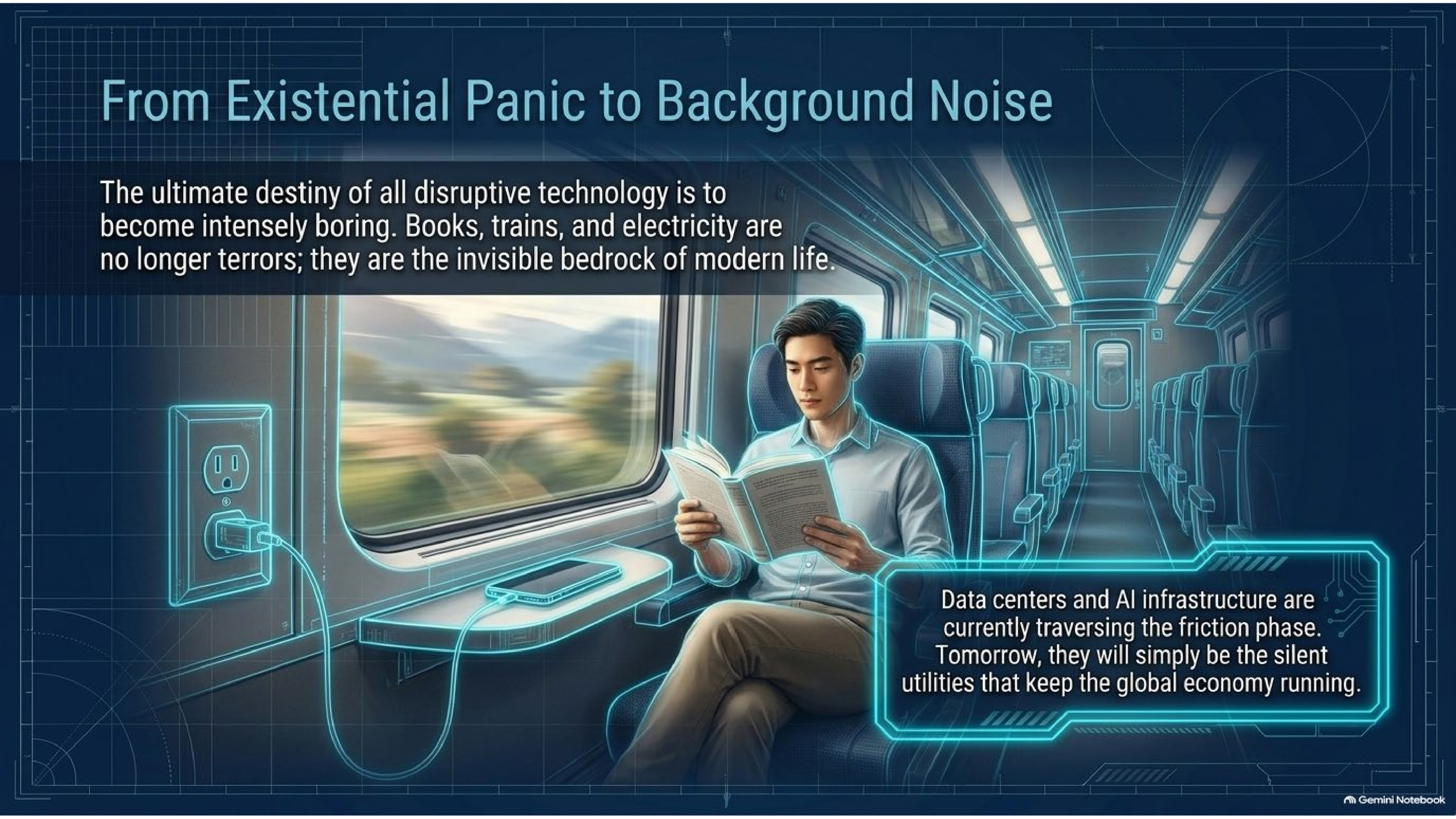
The Reality: Inscrutable Systems

Electricity was viewed as an unpredictable, invisible hazard. Fears of "stray voltage" souring milk, fires in dry hay barns, and accusations of federal co-op programs being "socialist debt traps" dominated rural discourse. Subsistence farmers feared the financial lock-in of mandatory monthly utility bills.

Gemini Notebook

From Existential Panic to Background Noise

The ultimate destiny of all disruptive technology is to become intensely boring. Books, trains, and electricity are no longer terrors; they are the invisible bedrock of modern life.



Data centers and AI infrastructure are currently traversing the friction phase. Tomorrow, they will simply be the silent utilities that keep the global economy running.

Gemini Notebook

Mastering the Infrastructure Buildout

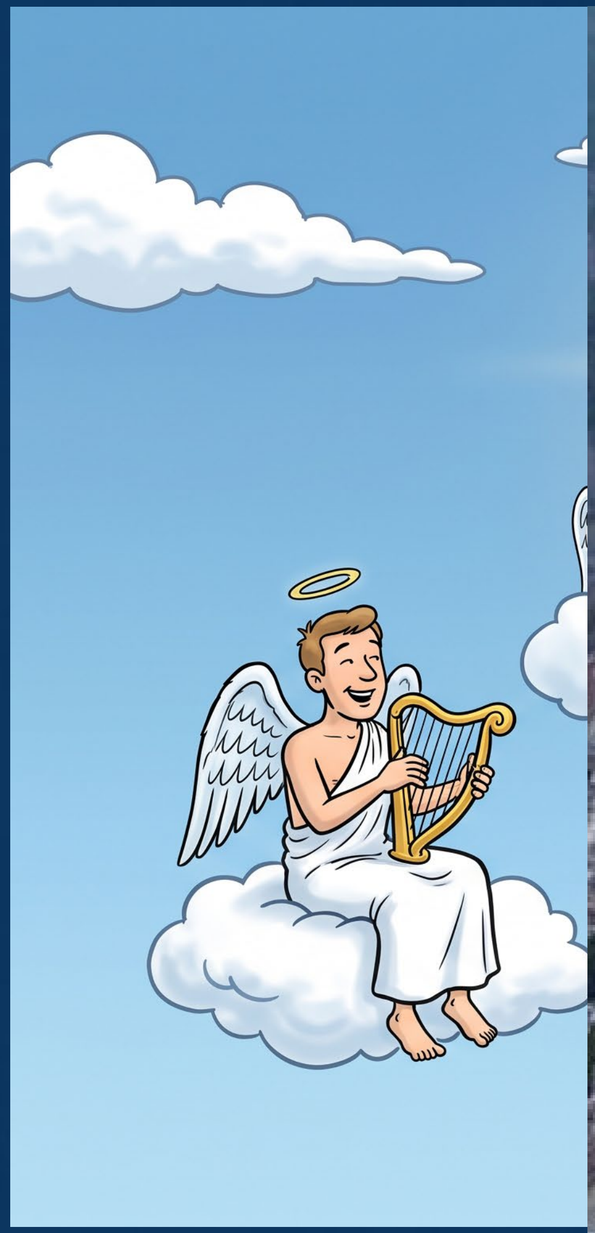
Point 1: History proves that initial societal rejection is standard operating procedure, not a catastrophic anomaly.

Point 2: Localized misinformation is a highly predictable byproduct of systemic change—it must be planned for, not just reacted to.

Final Takeaway: By recognizing these historical patterns, municipalities can bypass the panic phase, accelerate proactive planning and precision zoning, and capture generational economic opportunity without fear.

Gemini Notebook







The Cloud is Just Someone else's Computer, and that Computer has to live somewhere



1 **Physical Infrastructure**

The "Cloud" is heavily grounded. It consists of massive arrays of racks, servers, storage devices, and networking switches.

2 **Environmental Control**

Unprecedented power and cooling systems required to maintain centralized data storage and processing.

3 **Connectivity & Security**

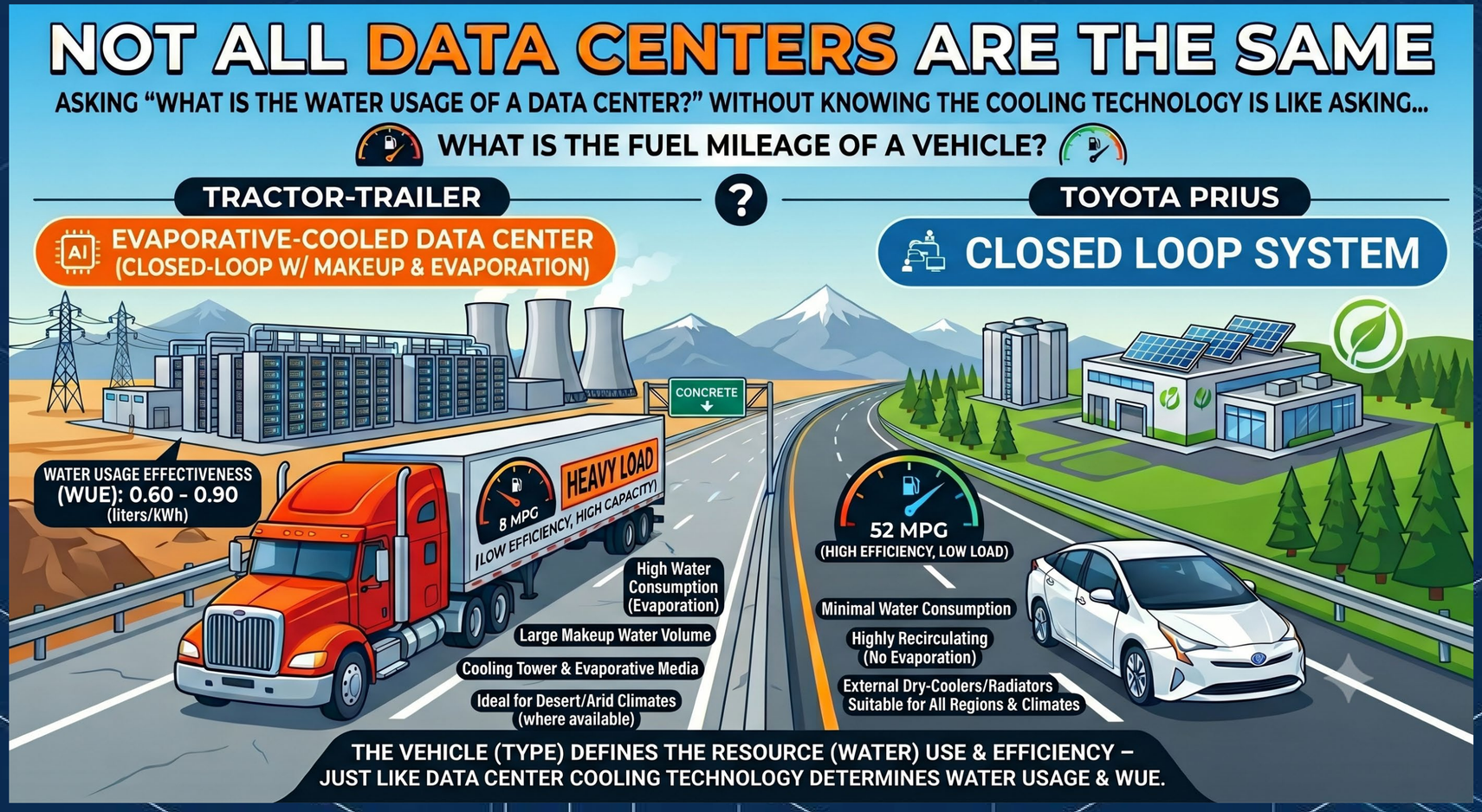
Robust, physical network infrastructure serving as the backbone for the daily operation of business.

4 **Footprint**

The engine powering the digital world requires massive, scalable, highly secure Industrial footprints.

Connectivity
High-capacity, redundant fiber networks

NOT ALL DATA CENTERS ARE THE SAME



NotebookLM

The Typology Matrix: Defining the Facilities



Typical size:
~1,000 – 10,000 sq ft



Typical size:
~50,000 – 300,000 sq ft



Typical size:
~500,000 – 2,000,000+ sq ft

Enterprise Data Centers

Ownership: Owned and operated by individual organizations.
Power / Rack 5-10 kW

Purpose: Built exclusively to support that specific organization's internal computing needs.

Colocation Data Centers

Ownership: Third-party facilities.
Power / Rack 15-30 kW

Purpose: Leases space, shared infrastructure, and security to multiple different organizations under one roof.

Hyperscale

Ownership: Major technology corporations (AWS, Google, Microsoft, Meta).
Power / Rack 40-120 kW

Purpose: Massive facilities designed to handle extremely large-scale computing workloads and rapid scalability.

The Velocity of the Digital Boom



THE SCALE OF AMERICAN DATA



AMERICANS CREATE

940

TERABYTES

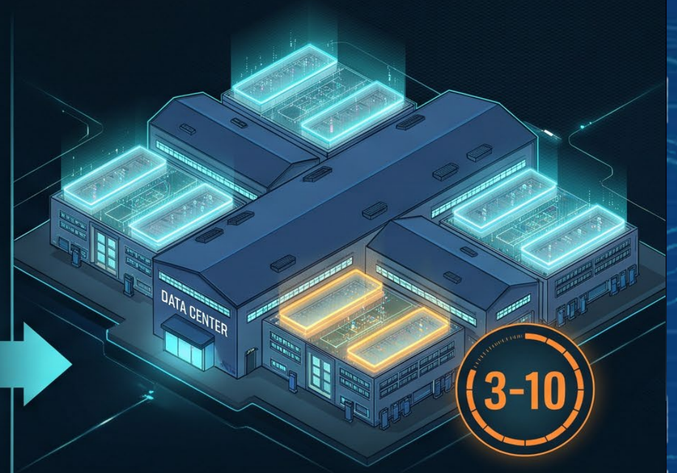
EVERY WEEK



FILLING UP

1 DATA HALL

A typical data center has 3-10 data halls.

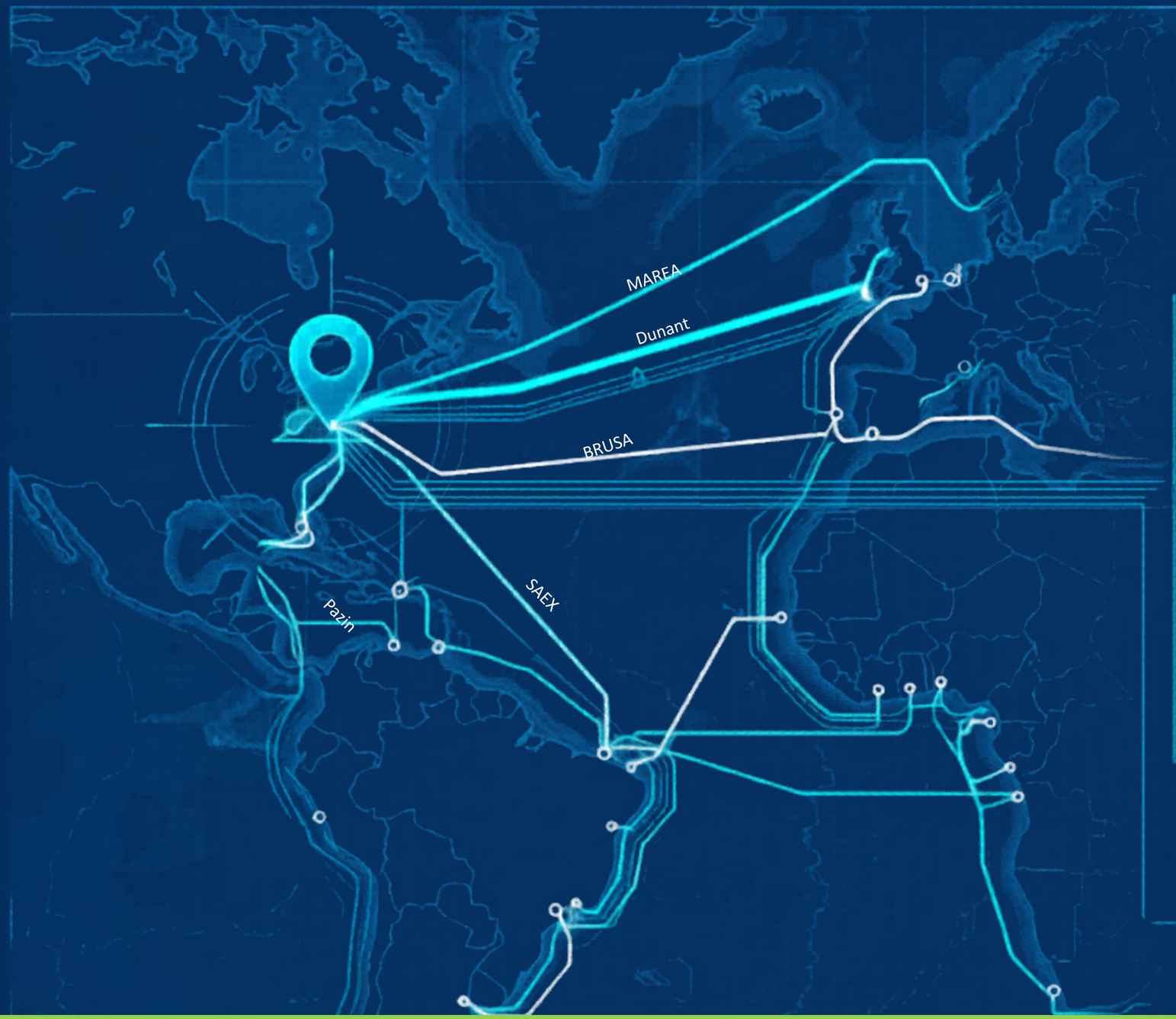


FILLS A DATA CENTER

EVERY

3-10 WEEKS

Core Insight: Data centers are a necessity for modern life. Demand will only deepen due to complex AI applications across medical, transportation, defense, and energy sectors. These facilities are highly unlikely to ever become obsolete.



The Epicenter of the Global Digital Economy

The Global Heavyweight

Virginia hosts more than 600 data centers statewide.

Market Dominance

Northern Virginia alone constitutes 13% of all reported operational capacity globally, and 25% of the Americas.

Hyper-scale Hub

Over 35% of all known hyper-scale data centers worldwide are located in Virginia.

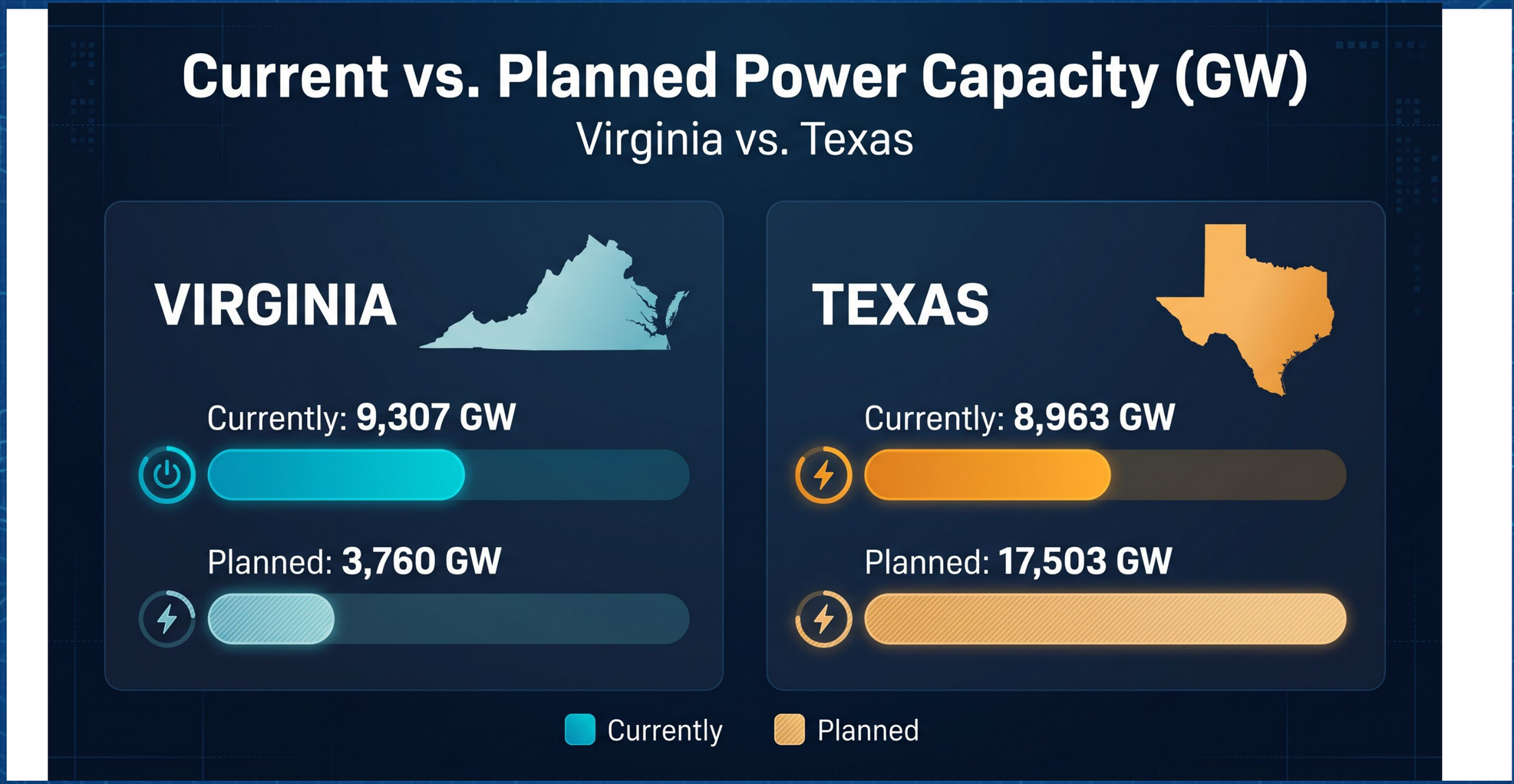
Physical Connections

Virginia Beach is the landing point for 4 major transoceanic fiber cables (MAREA, Dunant, BRUSA, SAEx).

Historical Anchor

Rooted in the 1990s infrastructure established by America Online (AOL) in Dulles.

The Velocity of the Digital Boom



Virginia's Data Center Market



Recent Announcements Related to Data Centers:

Munters – Botetourt Co.
$30 Million
270 Direct Jobs

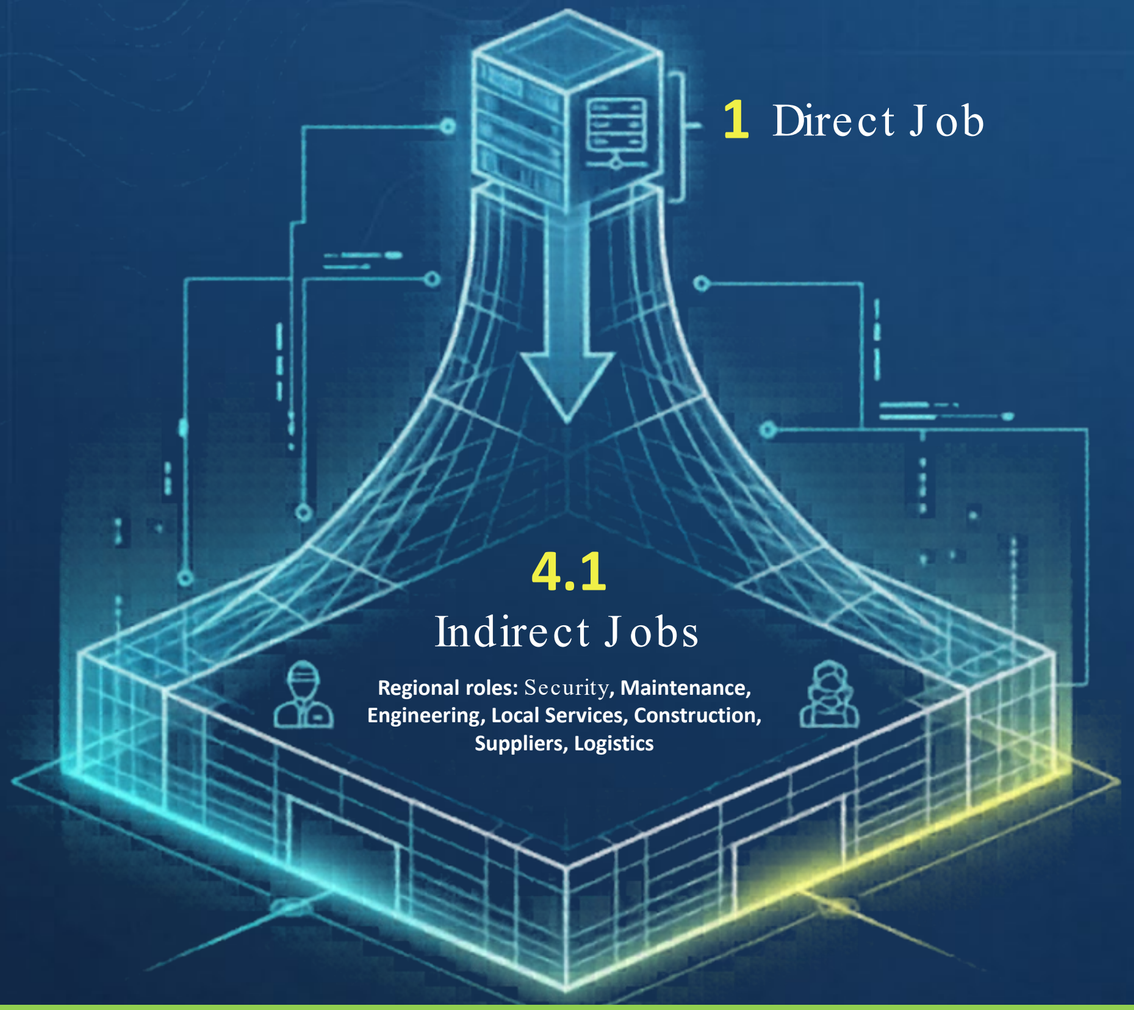
Hitachi – Halifax County
$457 Million
825 Direct Jobs

Delta Star – Lynchburg
$35 Million
300 Direct Jobs

Cooper Steel – Amherst County
2 Expansions in the last few years

The Multiplier Effect: Beyond Direct Headcount

Multiplier **Funnel**



The Investment Reality

While data centers do not boast high job-creation numbers per acre, their economic footprint is deceivingly large. Every direct job created inside the facility supports 4.1 indirect jobs in the surrounding regional economy.

The Capital Advantage 3 - 5 – 7 Years

Unlike traditional industrial assets, data centers do not heavily depreciate in tax value over time. Because the interior networking and processing equipment is constantly modified, upgraded, and replaced, the personal property tax base remains highly lucrative for local governments year after year.

The Local Reality: The Economic Engine

2026 FINANCIAL BENEFITS OF A 50 MW DATA CENTER IN VA

BUILDING PHASE

Building Phase

- Employment: **4,608 jobs**
- GDP: **$627,480,000**
- Personal Income: **$353,030,000**

OPERATIONS PHASE

Operations Phase

- Employment: **706 jobs**
- GDP: **$182,820,000**
- Personal Income: **$127,038,000**

US Chamber of Commerce

UTILITY IMPACTS: ELECTRIC POWER

Large, concentrated load

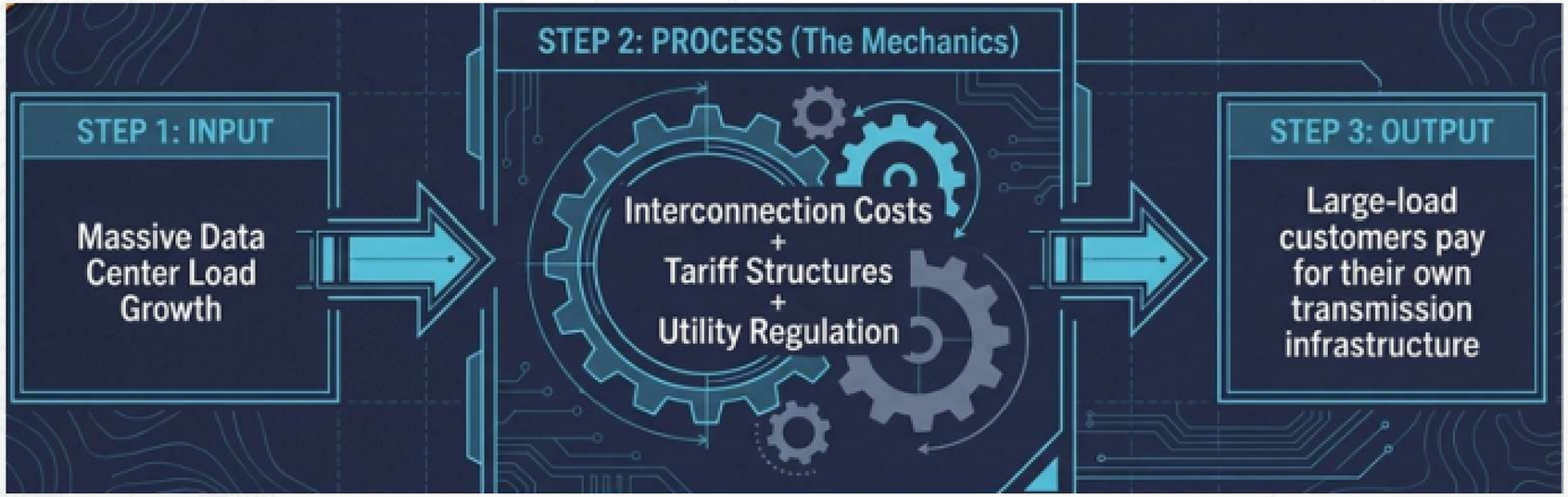
Data centers can require substantial new electric capacity. Scale varies widely by facility and campus.

Infrastructure

Large loads may require substations, transmission upgrades and new generation or other system investments.

Who pays?

A key policy and regulatory question is how utility tariffs and contracts allocate infrastructure costs among the customer and other ratepayers. This is established at the state and federal level



UTILITY IMPACTS: WATER USE DEPENDS ON DESIGN

Cooling technology is the first question.

Evaporative cooling

Can consume significant water because water is lost through evaporation. Large facilities can have high daily demand, especially during warm conditions.

Closed-loop / air / liquid cooling

Can greatly reduce direct ongoing water consumption, although designs and supplemental cooling strategies vary.

JLARC estimated Virginia data centers used about 2.1 billion gallons in 2023. That equates to an average of under 6 million gallons per day used by ALL data centers in the state. Most data centers used water comparable to a large office building or less, but a small number used substantially more.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

Air

Backup generators and any on-site primary generation can emit NOx, particulate matter and other pollutants. Virginia DEQ air permitting applies based on equipment and emissions.

Water

Evaluate withdrawal source, cooling system, wastewater, drought/peak conditions and whether groundwater or nearby private wells warrant baseline monitoring.

Site & community

Stormwater, grading, habitat, visual effects, noise and construction impacts are site-specific and can be addressed through applicable permits and local standards.

LAND USE CONSIDERATIONS

Compatibility

Is the site appropriate for an industrial use of the proposed scale?

Setbacks & screening

How are buildings, equipment, substations and generators separated from neighbors?

Noise

What limits apply at the property line, including low-frequency sound?

Transportation

What are construction-phase truck and workforce impacts?

Buildout

Is the application one building, a campus, or the first phase of a larger plan?

Predictability

Clear standards help both the community and applicants understand expectations.

WHO REGULATES WHAT?

Local government

Comprehensive plan and zoning; by-right vs. conditional/special use; setbacks, screening, height, noise and other development standards within legal authority.

State / federal

DEQ and other agencies regulate applicable air emissions, water withdrawals/discharges, stormwater and environmental requirements.

Utilities / regulators

Electric service, interconnection, system upgrades, tariffs and cost allocation are addressed through utilities and applicable regulatory processes.

Local zoning can address land-use compatibility, but it does not replace utility planning or state/federal environmental permitting.

LOCAL ZONING APPROACHES

By-right with standards

Defines where the use is permitted and establishes objective development standards in advance.

High predictability, less project-specific discretionary review.

Conditional / special use

Allows project-specific review and conditions where authorized.

More discretion and public review, less certainty for applicants.

Hybrid approaches

Some localities combine mapped districts, use-specific standards, overlays or thresholds based on size/load.

The appropriate approach depends on local policy direction.

QUESTIONS THAT COULD BE HELPFUL TO EVALUATE A PROPOSAL

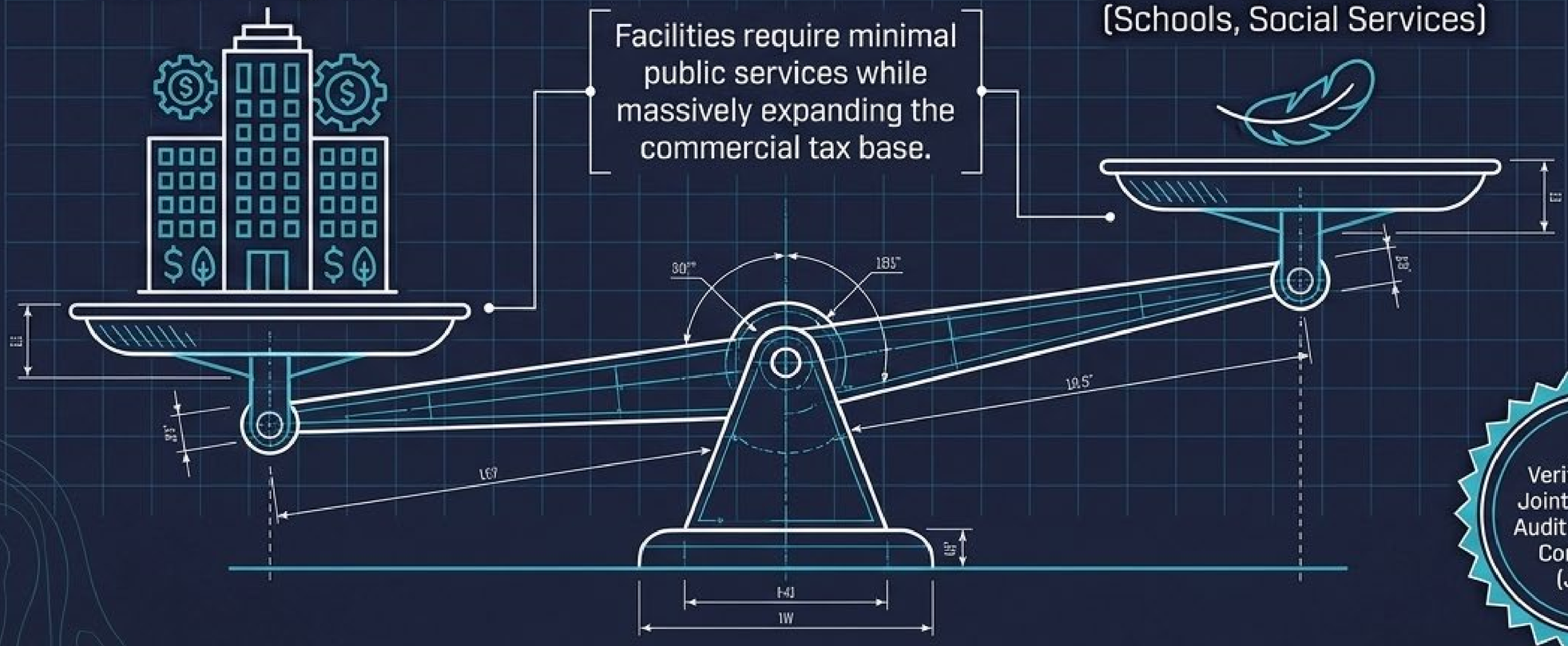
- What is the full anticipated buildout?
- How much electric load is requested, and what upgrades are required?
- What cooling system and water source are proposed?
- How many generators, and under what permits/operating limits?
- Is this a real project or a prospective/land bank proposal?
- What are the tax terms and permanent employment commitments?
- What setbacks, noise limits and screening apply? What construction impacts should be expected?
- What future expansion could occur without additional review?

Facilities generate massive commercial tax bases with minimal public service burden.

Massive Commercial Tax Base Expansion

Minimal Footprint on Municipal Services
(Schools, Social Services)

Facilities require minimal public services while massively expanding the commercial tax base.



Verified by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC).

NotebookLM

Community Dividends: Translating Data into Local Value



Advocacy & Education

Planners must lead proactive community engagement to address misinformation. Resistance frequently stems from misconceptions about functions, environmental impact, and integration.

The Ultimate Benefit: The Henrico Example

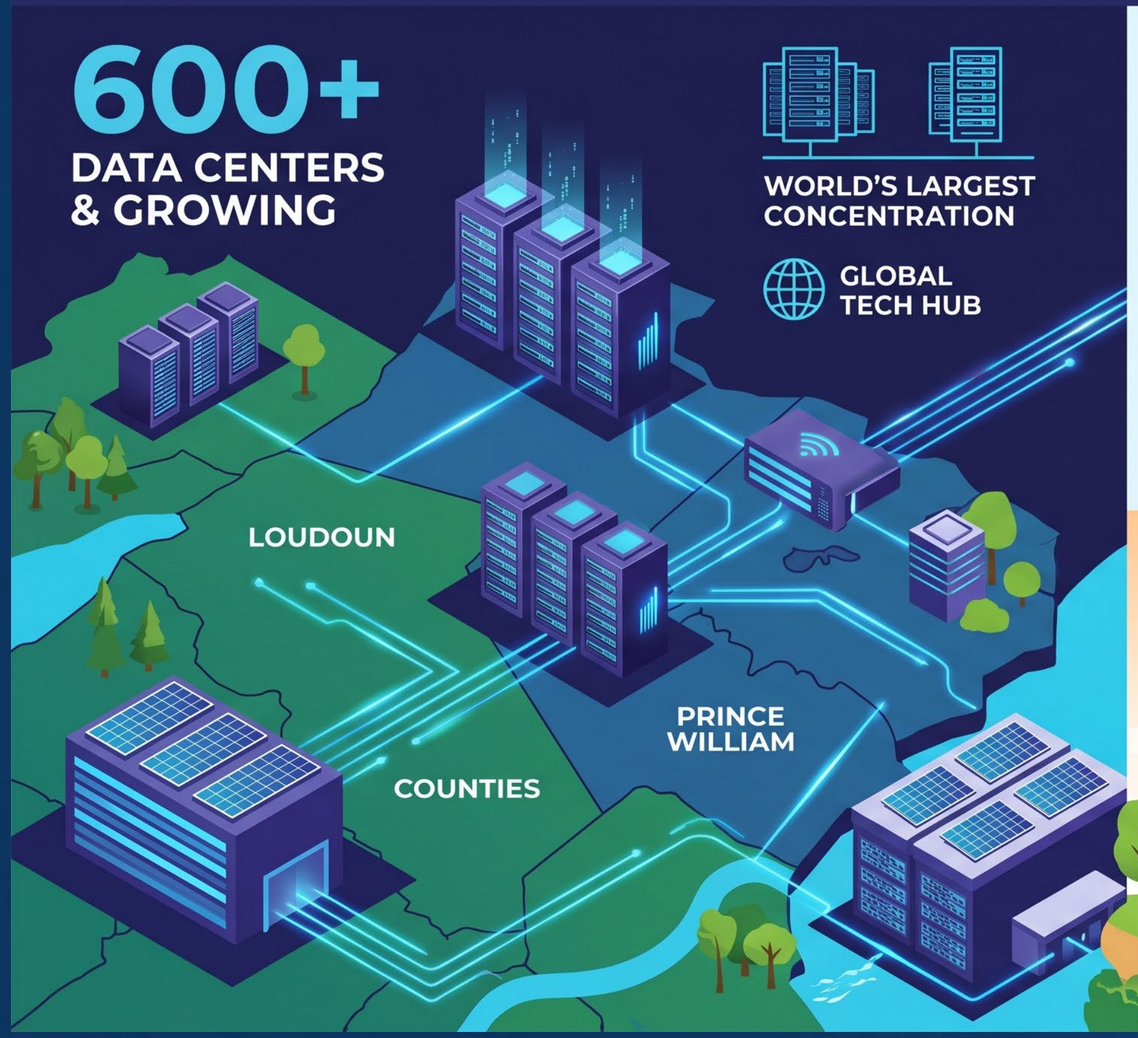
$60 MILLION FUND

When planned correctly, the massive tax influx transforms communities. Henrico County built a $60 Million Affordable Housing Trust Fund funded entirely by local data centers, providing grant subsidies to build 150-200 affordable homes annually for moderate-income buyers.

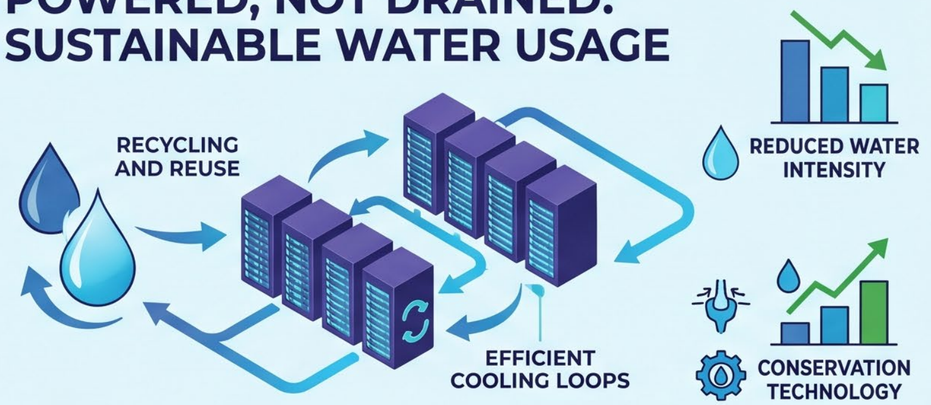
Final Takeaway

By using precision zoning and proactive planning, municipalities can master the physical constraints of the cloud, secure their energy future, and capture generational wealth for their citizens.

NORTHERN VA: DATA CENTER CAPITAL OF THE WORLD



POWERED, NOT DRAINED: SUSTAINABLE WATER USAGE



LOUDOUN COUNTY: AMONG THE HEALTHIEST IN THE U.S.

VIRGINIA DEQ REPORT



Thank You

Questions?

PANEL SESSION #1

Site Selection Concerns & Construction

Facilitator – Larry Jackson, PE, Director of Energy - H&P



MATT ROWE
Executive Director, Pittsylvania County EDA



GREG VLASSOPOLOS
Data Center Manager, Schnieder Electric



MATT CONRAD
Vice President of Business Development and External Affairs, TRACT

COMMONWEALTH REGIONAL COUNCIL
DISTRICT 14
VIRGINIA'S HEARTLAND

HURT & PROFFITT

PANEL SESSION #2

Community Benefits

Facilitator – Jessica Littlejohn, PE, VP of Business Dev - H&P



DAVID MANLEY
Executive Director, Tobacco Rural Revitalization Commission



ALEX GOTTSCHALK
County Administrator, Mecklenburg County



ANTHONY ROMANELLO
Managing Partner, S.I.R.



JEREMY SATTERFIELD
TechSpark Manager, Microsoft

COMMONWEALTH REGIONAL COUNCIL
DISTRICT 14
VIRGINIA'S HEARTLAND

HURT & PROFFITT

KEYNOTE

National & Statewide Legislative Outlook on Data Centers



PRESTON BRYANT

Senior VP, Infrastructure & Economic Development, McGuireWoods Consulting

McGUIREWOODS CONSULTING
Public Affairs Solutions

COMMONWEALTH REGIONAL COUNCIL
DISTRICT 14
VIRGINIA'S HEARTLAND

HURT & PROFFITT

McGuireWoods CONSULTING

Data Centers
Economic Impact … But a Changing Landscape

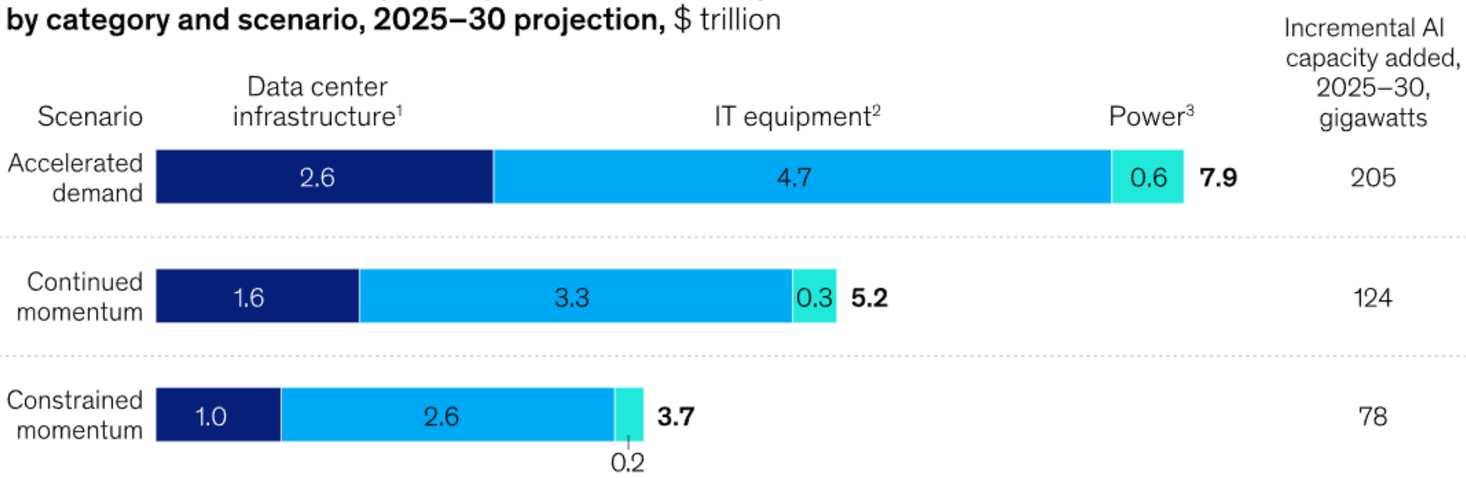
L. Preston Bryant, Jr., SVP, Infrastructure and Economic Development
Christopher D. Lloyd, SVP and Director, Infrastructure and Economic Development

Southside Virginia Community College, Keysville
October 27, 2026

Data Center Industry
National Economic Impact

Capital investments to support AI-related data center capacity demand could range from about $3 trillion to $8 trillion by 2030.

Global data center total capital expenditures driven by AI, by category and scenario, 2025–30 projection, $ trillion



Note: Figures may not sum to totals, because of rounding.
[1]Excludes IT services and software (eg, operating system, data center infrastructure management), since they require relatively low capex compared with other components.
[2]Includes server, storage, and network infrastructure. IT capex also accounts for replacing AI accelerators every 4 years.
[3]Assumes $2.2 billion–$3.2 billion/gigawatt (including power generation and transmission cost) to account for a range of power generation scenarios (eg, fully powered by gas, a combination of gas power and storage, and solar) and regional cost differences. Distribution cost is neglected, as most AI centers are expected to be >50 megawatt scale and connected to a transmission grid.
Source: McKinsey Data Center Capex TAM Model; McKinsey Data Center Demand Model

McKinsey & Company

Big Tech's AI Push Is Costing a Lot More Than the Moon Landing

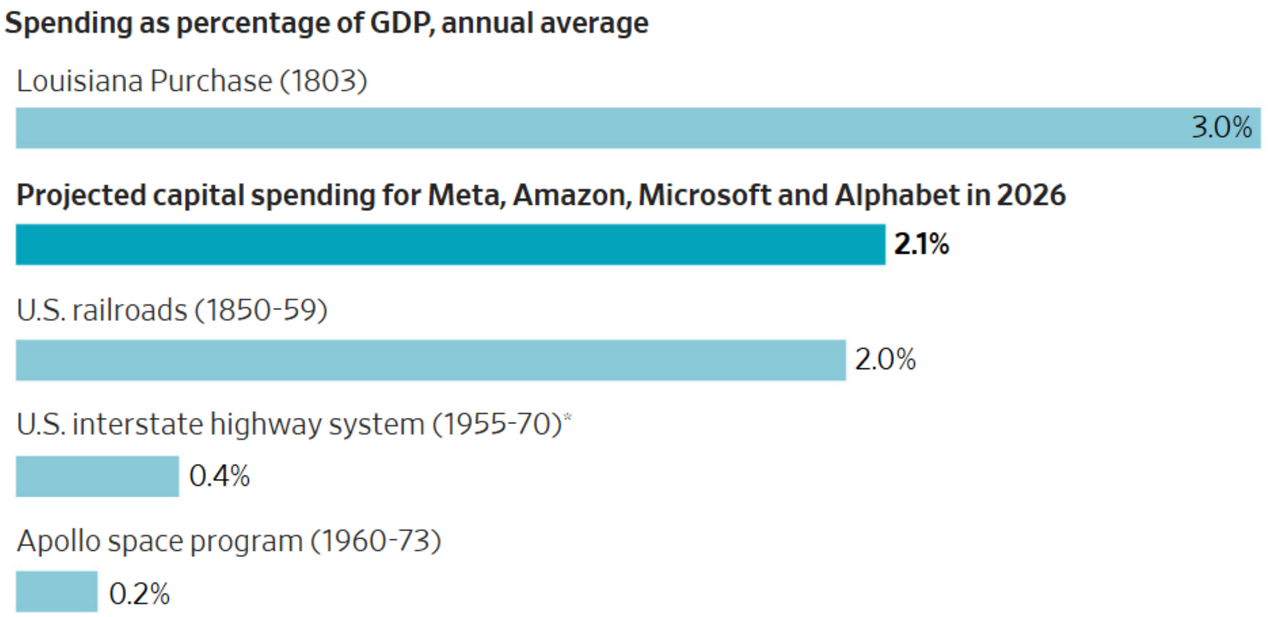
As a percentage of GDP, the projected 2026 spending of four tech giants rivals the most momentous capital efforts in U.S. history

By Meghan Bobrowsky Follow , *Drew An-Pham* Follow *and Alana Pipe* Follow

Feb. 7, 2026 5:30 am ET

Gift unlocked article

Listen (2 min)



National Data Center Growth

What’s Driving Data Center Growth?

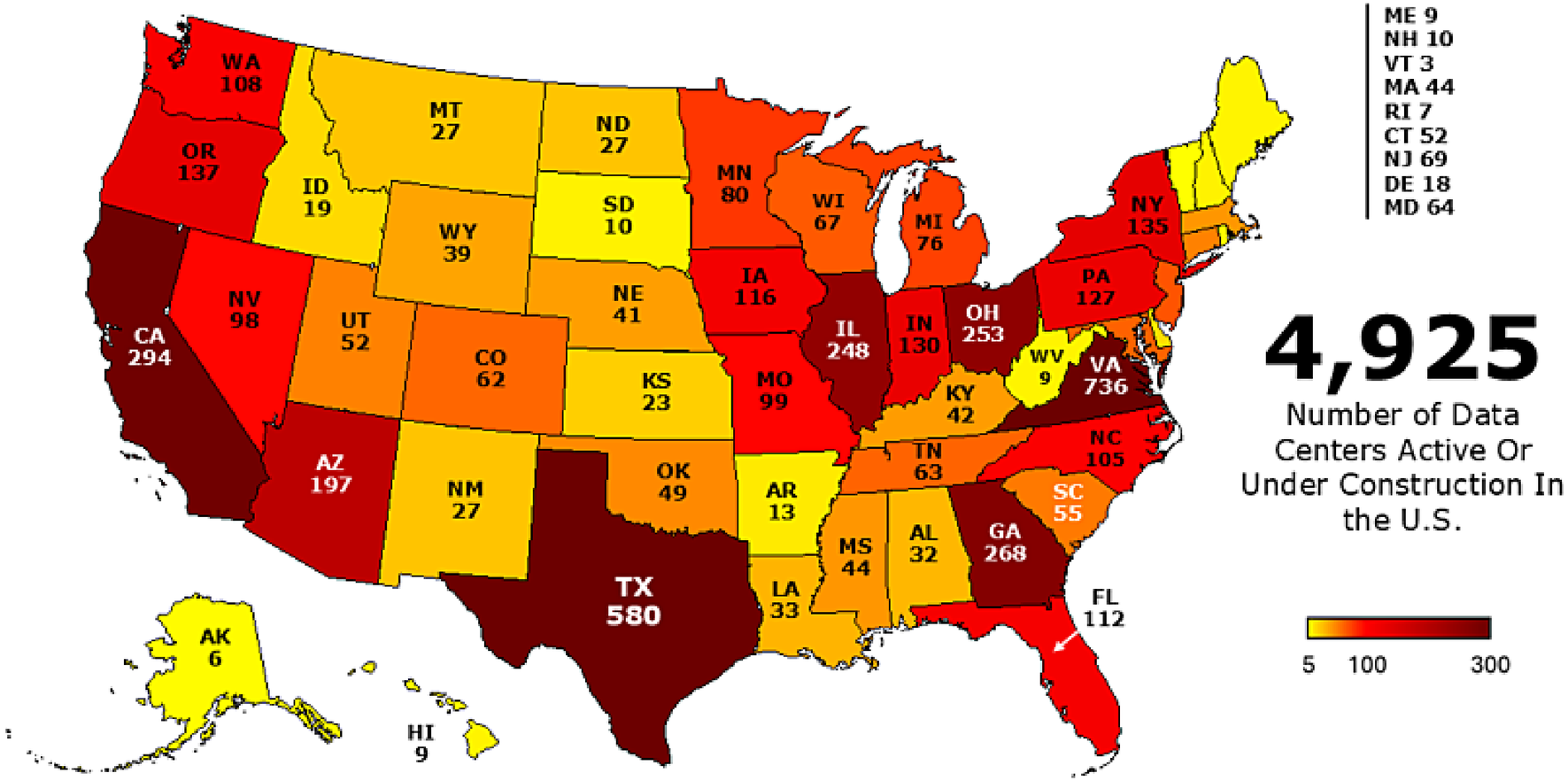


What's Driving Data Center Growth?

- Each home in the U.S. has an average of **16 connected devices**
- **Every day**, Netflix users stream **203,840,000 hours of content**
- **98% of Americans have a smart phone**
- Google Maps/Waze use is, on average, **269 minutes per month per user**
- **Google Maps receives updates at a remarkable rate of 200 contributions per second,** amounting to **200 million pieces of data from users every day,** ensuring constant currentness
- Banking is now digital, with around **77-85% of U.S. adults banking online** at least partially, primarily via mobile apps (around 55%) or web browsers
- Travel bookings are now made online, with estimates ranging from **around 70% to 74% of total bookings in 2024/2025**

Data Centers Across The U.S.

Number of Data Centers, Active and Under Construction

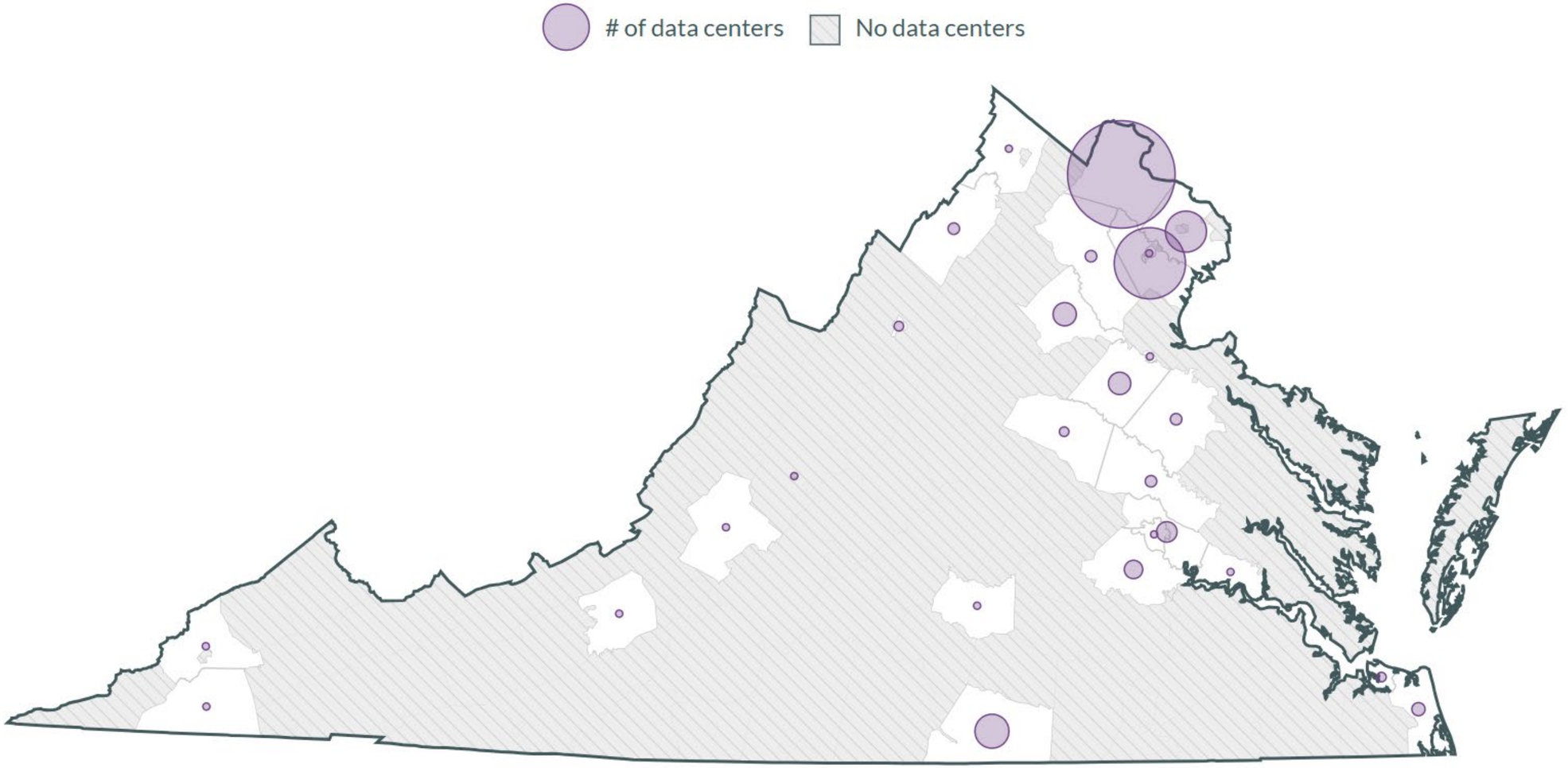


American Farm Bureau Federation®

Source: Data Center Map, Analysis by American Farm Bureau Federation

Virginia Data Center Growth

Virginia Data Center Map



DATA CENTER COALITION

Data Center Industry Impact in Virginia

Statewide Impacts

$80.56 billion

Invested FY2024-2025 by companies participating in the sales and use tax incentive program[1]

$9.1 billion

Average total annual contribution to Virginia GDP, FY21-FY23[2]

Data center investment represented **84 percent of the total capital investment across all economic develop projects** announced by the Virginia Economic Development Partnership between FY22 and FY24.[2]



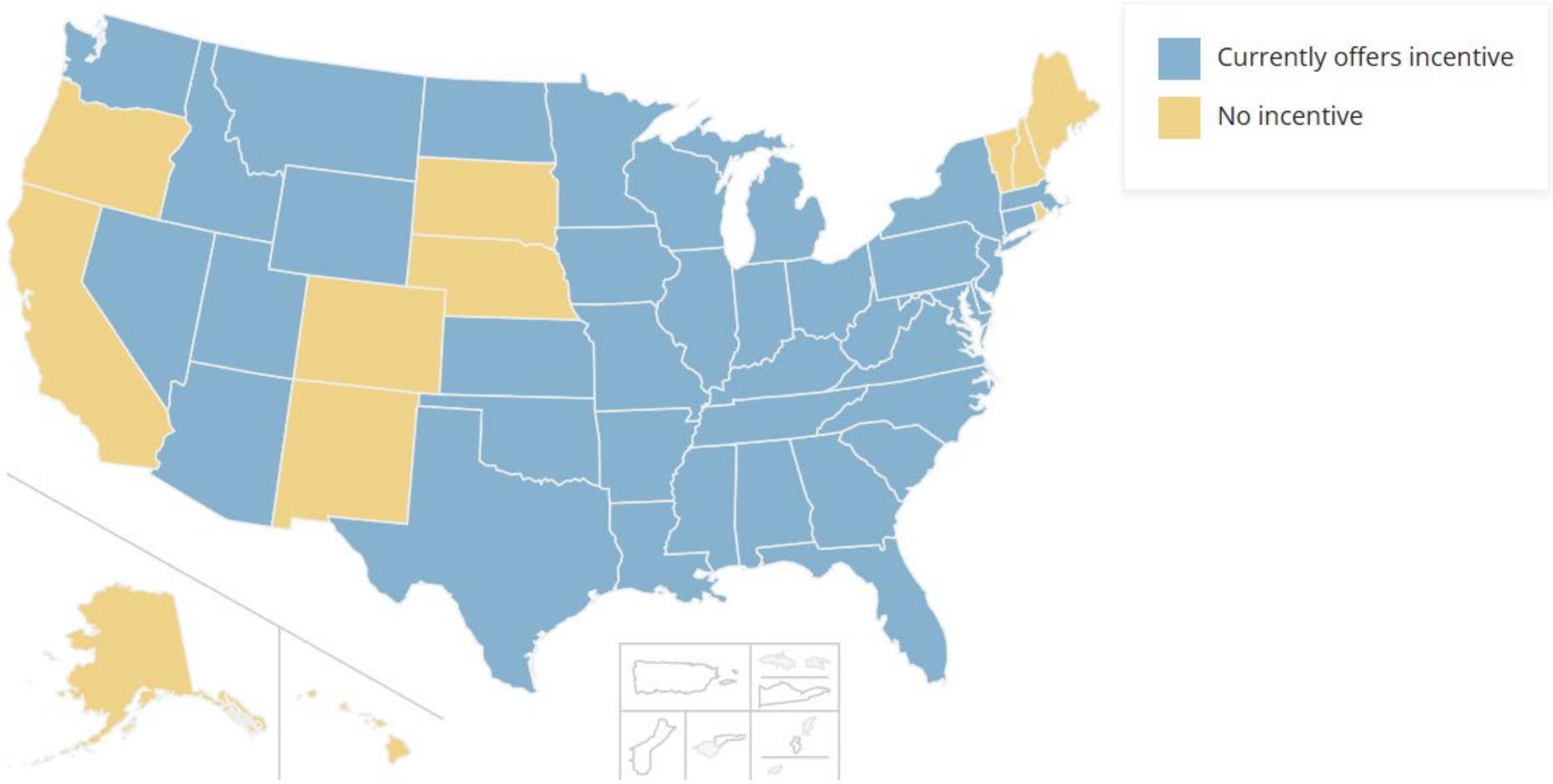
Recent Publicly Reported Projects and Announcements Include	Caroline County | Charles City | Chesterfield County | Culpeper County | Fauquier County | Hanover County | Henrico County | King George County | Louisa County | Mecklenburg County | Orange County | Spotsylvania County | Stafford County | Surry County

[1] *Virginia Department of Taxation Biennial Report on the Retail Sales and Use Tax Exemption, January 2026*
[2] *Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission, Data Centers in Virginia, December 2024*

www.datacentercoalition.org
www.centerofyourdigitalworld.org/impact-study

How Data Center Revenue is Being Used in Virginia

- Loudoun County – $895 million in 2025 that has lowered property tax rates and fueled significant school construction
- Henrico County – $60 million commitment to creating an Affordable Housing Trust Fund
- Mecklenburg County – Lowest property tax rate in the state ($0.31/$100) and rebuilt entire school system with cash in 5 years
- Prince William County – $280 million in 2025 that has lowered both real and personal property tax rates
- Louisa County has announced a 15% reduction in the car tax

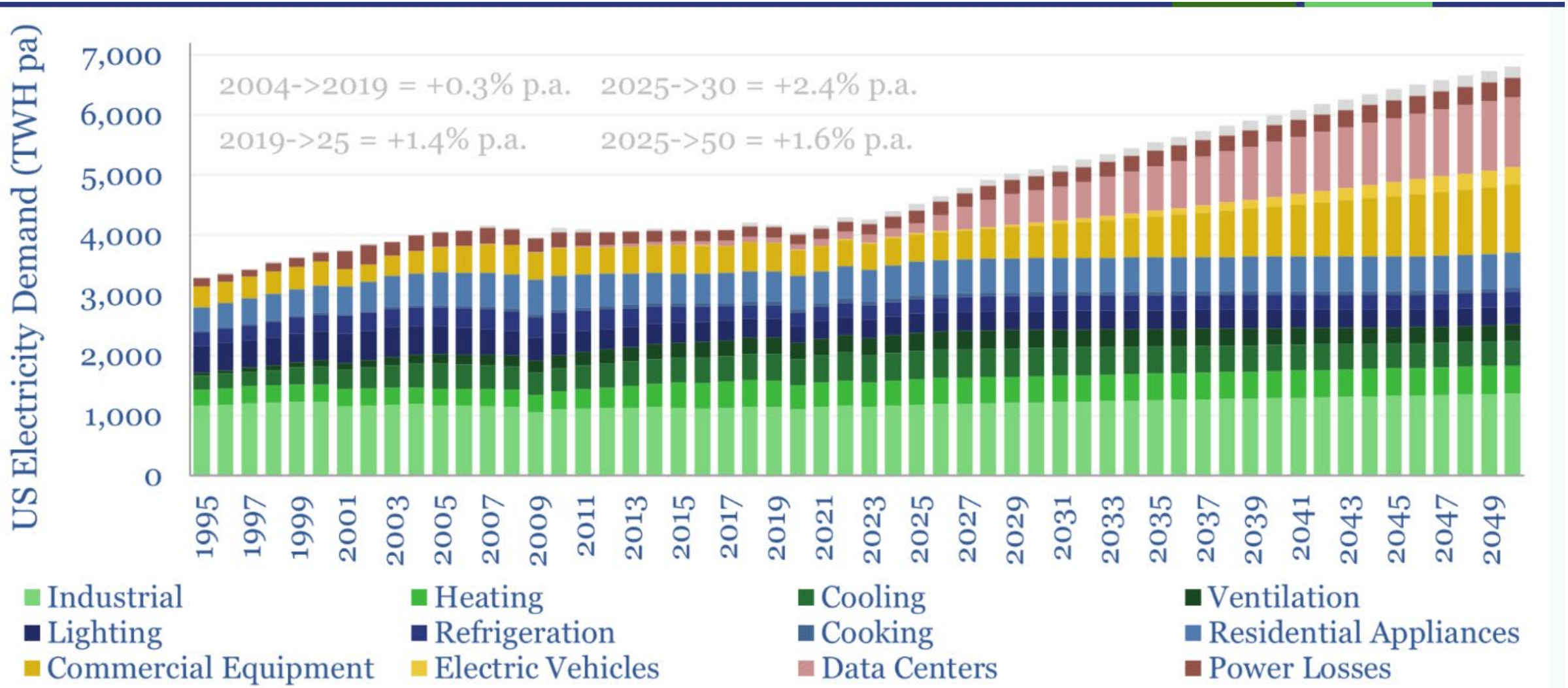

Currently offers incentive
No incentive

Energy, Water, Other Impacts
(But there are some myths)

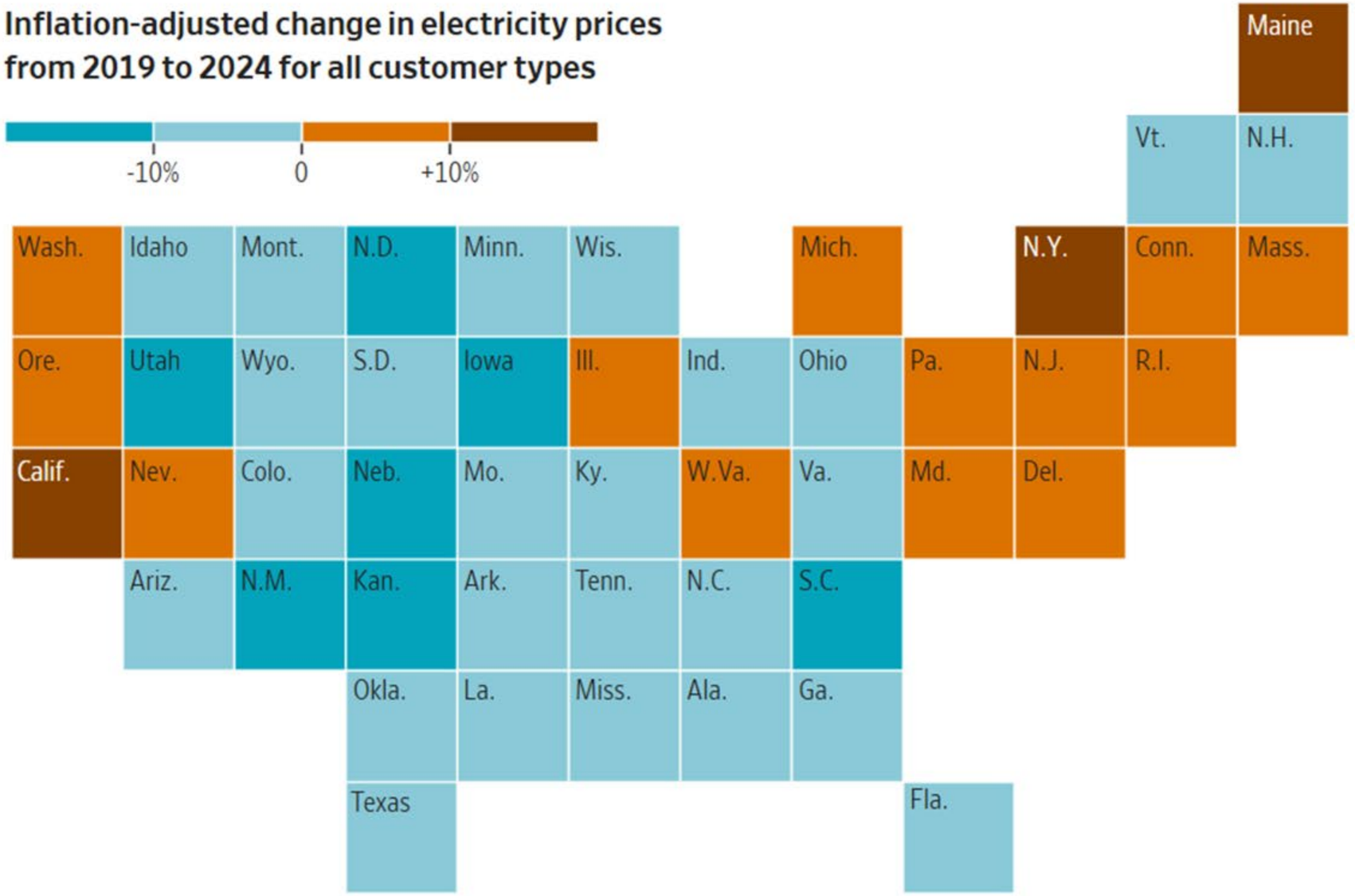
Essential Elements for Data Center Operations

- Power (amount and type)
- Water and wastewater
- Fiber
- Generators

** All are impacted by the type of data center and the user profile **

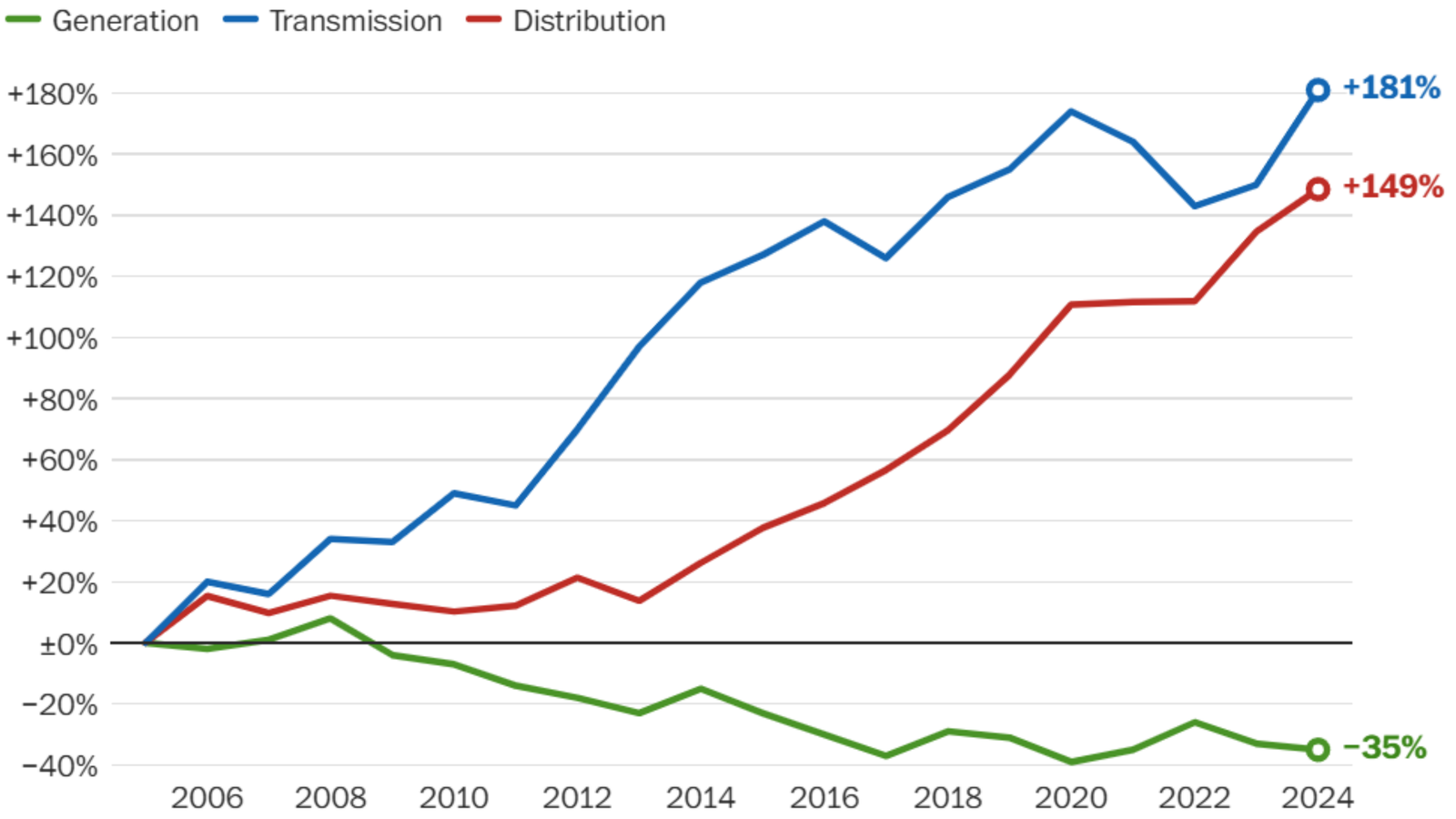

US Electricity Demand (TWH pa)
7,000
6,000
5,000
4,000
3,000
2,000
1,000
0
2004->2019 = +0.3% p.a.
2019->25 = +1.4% p.a.
2025->30 = +2.4% p.a.
2025->50 = +1.6% p.a.
1995
1997
1999
2001
2003
2005
2007
2009
2011
2013
2015
2017
2019
2021
2023
2025
2027
2029
2031
2033
2035
2037
2039
2041
2043
2045
2047
2049
Industrial
Heating
Cooling
Ventilation
Lighting
Refrigeration
Cooking
Residential Appliances
Commercial Equipment
Electric Vehicles
Data Centers
Power Losses

Inflation-adjusted change in electricity prices from 2019 to 2024 for all customer types



Distribution and transmission costs have soared, while generation costs have fallen

Percent change in capital and operational spending since 2005



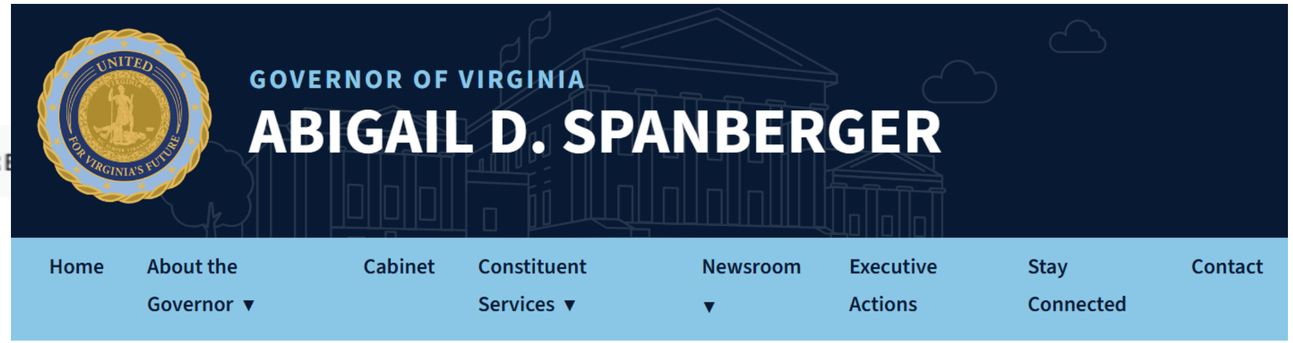
Source: Brattle, Energy Information Administration

STACK Infrastructure Proudly Supports Governor Abbott in Advancing Responsible Data Center Growth in Texas

PRESS RELEASE GlobeNewswire

Aug. 10, 2026, 08:00 AM

SHARE



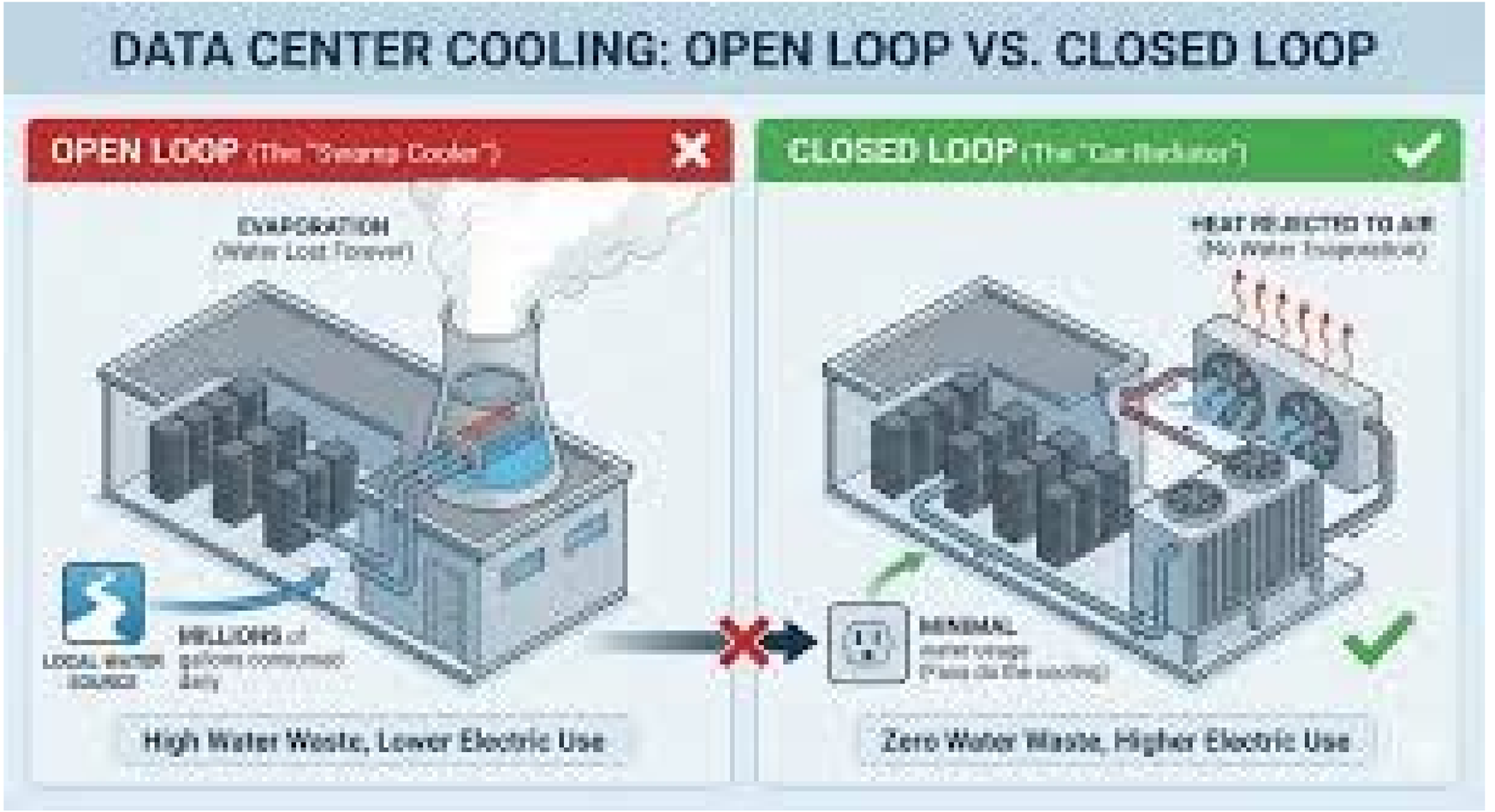
For Immediate Release: August 10, 2026
Office of the Governor Contact: press@governor.virginia.gov

ICYMI: After Filing by Governor Spanberger, SCC Requires Data Centers to Pay for New Transmission Infrastructure



Water Consumption/Year in the US

- Agriculture – 118 billion gallons/day for irrigation (USGS)
- Beef – 21.2 trillion gallons (University of Nebraska)
- Golf Courses – 547 billion gallons (USGA)
- Data centers – 17 billion gallons (Environmental Energy Study Institute)
- Soft drinks – 11.9 billion gallons


DATA CENTER COOLING: OPEN LOOP VS. CLOSED LOOP
OPEN LOOP (The "Swamp Cooler")
CLOSED LOOP (The "Car Radiator")
EVAPORATION
(Water Lost Forever)
HEAT REJECTED TO AIR
(No Water Evaporation)
LOCAL WATER SOURCE
MILLIONS of
gallons consumed
daily
MINIMAL
High Water Waste, Lower Electric Use
Zero Water Waste, Higher Electric Use

Virginia Data Center Industry
Economic Impacts / Job Creation

Data Center Job Creation

- 50-100 full-time jobs per 250,000 square feet
- Large hyperscale facilities may have a lower job/SF ratio
- Supports hundreds of construction jobs during development
- Average annual wages of $75,000-$90,000 (national average even higher)
- Indirect and induced benefits

Jobs: Direct, Indirect, Induced

Category	Meaning	Data Center Examples
Direct	The first round of spending and employment by the industry	Construction jobs, wages, materials and equipment bought for the project site; data center employees during operations
Indirect	Business-to-business purchases from in-state suppliers	Transformers, electrical components, cooling systems, building materials, and architecture and engineering services
Induced	Spending by workers out of the income they earn in the industry and its supply chain	Housing, food, retail and local services

Statewide Economic Impact (JLARC Report, 2024)

- Economic benefits: construction v operations
  - Data center industry invested ~ $24 B in Virginia (2023)
  - Most economic benefits come during the construction phase
  - Construction is ~ 20% of data center facility investment

Metric	Construction Phase	Operations Phase	Total
Jobs	59,000 (35,000 direct)	15,000 (4,400 direct)	74,000 (39,400 direct)
Labor income	$4.3B ($2.6B direct)	$1.2B ($0.4B direct)	$5.5B ($3.1B direct)
Virginia GDP	$6.4B ($3.3B direct)	$2.7B ($1.1B direct)	$9.1B ($4.4B direct)

Jobs Relative to GDP (Estimated, per JLARC Report)

- Permanent staffing: Re a 250,000 sq.ft., facility – ~ 50-100 full-time workers (half are contractors)
- One data center building – ~ 12-18 months construction; ~ 1,500 workers on site

Measure	Calculation	Jobs per $1M of GDP
Total industry	74,000 ÷ $9.1B	about 8.1
Construction phase	59,000 ÷ $6.4B	about 9.2
Operations phase	15,000 ÷ $2.7B	about 5.6
Direct operations only	4,400 ÷ $1.1B	about 4.0

Construction Phase: Direct, Indirect, Induced

Impact	Jobs	Labor Income	Virginia GDP	Total Output
Direct	35,110	$2,646.6M	$3,342.1M	$7,887.7M
Indirect	9,945	$843.8M	$1,504.2M	$2,806.8M
Induced	13,992	$791.9M	$1,570.9M	$2,596.8M

A. Data Center Occupational Categories and Responsibilities

Occupational Category	Roles and Responsibilities
Data Center Technician/Server Operations Technician	Install, troubleshoot, repair, rack, cable, and decommission servers and network equipment.
Critical Facilities/Engineering Operations Technician	Operate the physical facility: cooling, fire and life safety, generators, uninterruptable power supplies, etc.
Electrical/Power Systems Technician or Engineer	Maintain electrical distribution, uninterrubptable power supplies, generators, switchgear, substations, and backup power systems.
Mechanical/HVAC/Cooling Technician	Maintain chillers, Computer Room Air Conditioning (CRAC) and Computer Room Air Handler (CRAH), pumps, piping, cooling towers, air/water systems, and mechanical infrastructure.
Data Center Operations Manager/Site or Shift Manager	Manage technicians, shift coverage, incident response, KPIs, staffing, vendors, maintenance windows, and daily operations.
Network Deployment/Cabling/ Fiber Technician	Install and troubleshoot fiber, copper, patch panels, swithces, network racks, and physical connectivity.
Construction/Project Manager/ Delivery Manager	Manage new builds, rack development, capacity delivery, vendor coordination, schedules, and construction execution.
Commissioning Engineer/ Commissioning Technician	Test and validate new facilities and systems before operations, electrical, mechanical, controls, integrated systems testing, and startup.
Logistics/Inventory/Asset Technician	Manage inbound/outbound equipment, parts asset tracking, spare inventory, warranty processes, and data-bearing-device handling.
Security	Manage access control, surveillance, badging, escorts, security operations, and physical site protection.

Public Opinion is Changing
(But there are some myths)

The Washington Post

Democracy Dies in Darkness

The data center rebellion is here, and it's reshaping the political landscape

As the buildout of AI infrastructure alarms communities, it is fast emerging as a potent electoral issue across the political divide.

January 6, 2026



"We know Trump wants data centers and Kevin Stitt wants data centers, but these things don't affect these people," said Brian Ingram, a Trump voter living in the shadow of the planned project. "You know, this affects us."

Ingram was standing before a homemade sign he planted on his front lawn that said, "Jesus Was Born on Ag Land."

The Washington Post

SCHAR School of Policy and Government
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

This Washington Post-Schar School poll was conducted by telephone March 26-31, 2026,

13. As you may know, data centers are large buildings filled with computer servers to support internet services. Do you support or oppose the state government providing tax breaks to companies that build data centers in Virginia which create at least 1,000 jobs?

	Support	Oppose	No opin./Skipped
3/31/26 RV	37	56	7
3/26/23 RV	61	31	8

The Washington Post

SCHAR School of Policy and Government
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

16. In places where data centers are built, do you think they have a (positive impact) or a (negative impact) on each of the following, or don't they make a difference?

3/31/26 - Summary table among registered voters

	Positive impact	Negative impact	Don't make a difference	No op./ Skipped
a. Funding for county governments	41	27	25	7
b. The local economy	42	30	25	4
c. The local environment	14	59	23	4
d. Property tax rates for local households	20	47	26	8
e. Home energy and utility bills	14	57	23	6
f. Creating jobs	56	17	24	3

(Order of items randomized)

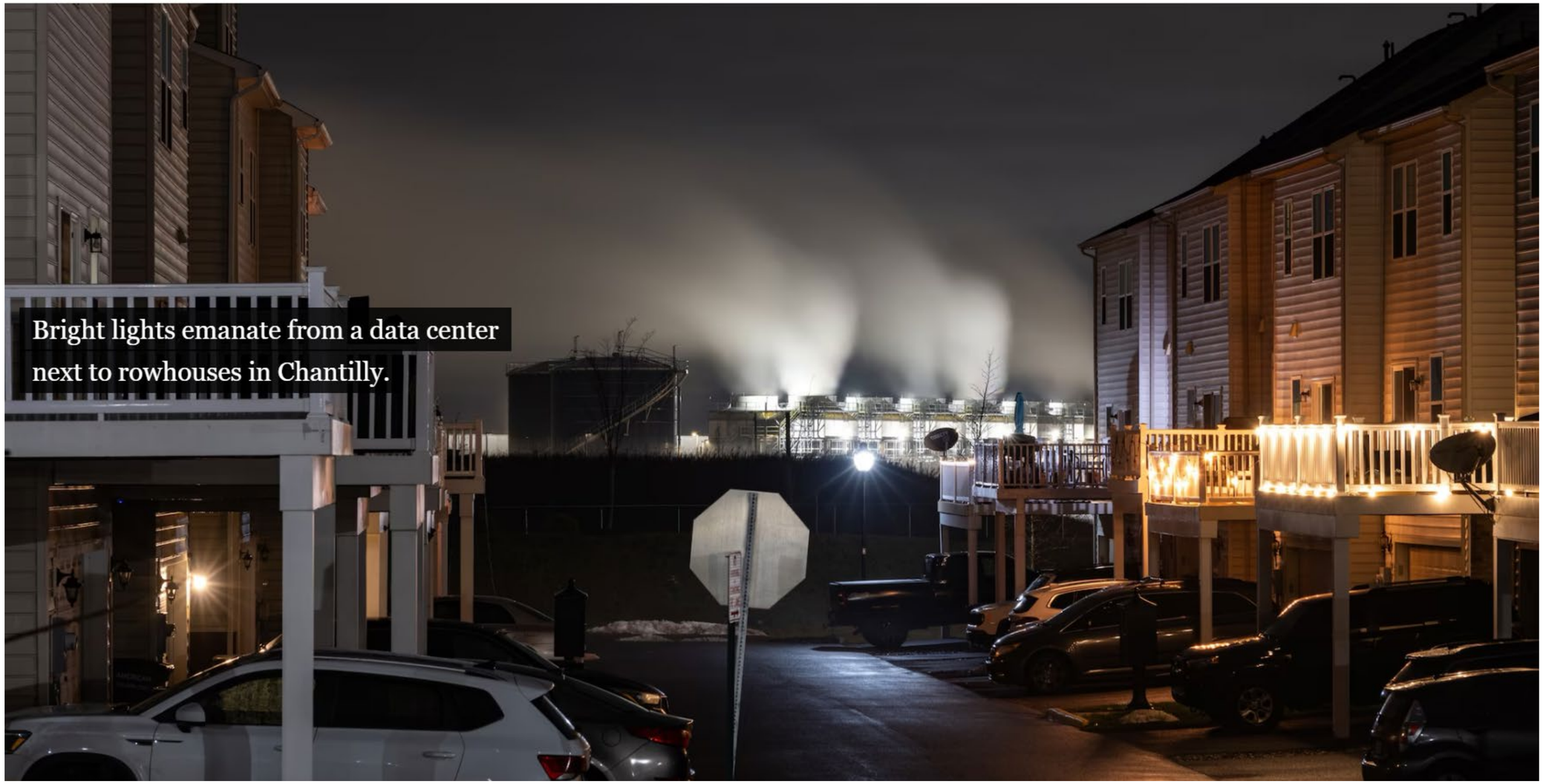
Local Government Considerations

Reports Find Data Centers Don't Lower Nearby Home Prices, Despite Widespread Concern

June 18, 2026 | 12:45 pm ET | Dan Rabb, Data Centers

As communities across the U.S. push back on data center projects, warnings that they will slash the value of nearby homes have been a prominent rallying cry.

But two studies this year have found more often than not, this isn't the case — surprising one researcher who dug into the data.



Bright lights emanate from a data center next to rowhouses in Chantilly.

Potential Community Benefits of a Data Center

- Low community impacts (traffic, strain on schools, little demand for additional housing)
- Occupy very little land relative to economic/fiscal value
- Allows for spreading the fixed cost of infrastructure (particularly power, water, sewer) and enhanced resiliency
- High paying jobs
- SIGNIFICANT local property tax revenues
- Attraction of data center supply chain companies

Issues to Consider and Tradeoffs of Data Centers

- Would you prefer to use industrial land for warehouses/manufacturing/housing?
- One and done or multiple data centers in the community?
- Importance of a redevelopment plan (should exist for all development scenarios)
- Are you willing to offer local tax incentives for data centers?
- Community consensus on how to spend the revenue (with a focus on one-time projects)
- Alignment with local/regional workforce training programs
- Implement proactive zoning/planning ordinances to address buffers/setbacks/noise attenuation/lighting/proximity to other uses
- Ability to permit at the local level (do you need to hire outside expertise?)
- Housing the construction workforce

Thank you.

Preston Bryant
pbryant@mwcllc.com
804.775.1923

McGuireWoods CONSULTING

THANK YOU

Commonwealth Regional Council

Data Center Educational Workshop

Thank you for joining us!

HURT & PROFFITT