



Good Citizenship by Design: The Business Case for Self-Supplied Data Centers

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Executive summary

Data centers that bring their own power and water, pay their own way, and open their books to the community will win sites faster and face fewer moratoriums than those that don't. Good citizenship is no longer a public-relations choice; it is becoming the price of entry.

Illinois shows why. The proposed [POWER Act \(SB4016/HB5513\)](#) would make data centers fund their own grid build-out, bring new clean energy, report water use quarterly, and sign enforceable community benefits agreements. The bill stalled in May 2026, but the Governor has paused data center tax incentives and sent the issue back for the fall veto session. Local governments are not waiting: Carbondale has passed a moratorium and Champaign County is drafting an ordinance.

Green Technology Global proposes a voluntary **Good Citizenship Standard** that meets or exceeds these expectations from day one. Its core is a campus that runs on its own micro-grid (PTE turbofans, about 20 MW in two 20-ft containers, scalable to GW with no single point of failure, installable in underground vaults for noise control, with heat and emissions recovery) and makes its own water (GTG atmospheric water generators with water vapor recovery). The business payoff:

- **Speed to power** — energize on the developer's schedule, not the utility interconnection queue.
- **Lower approval risk** — arrive at zoning hearings with answers on bills, water, noise and pollution.
- **Regulatory readiness** — designed to the strictest pending rules, so a new law is not a redesign.
- **New revenue and resilience** — sell surplus power where permitted and remove single points of failure.

The context: communities are setting the terms

Illinois has about 115 operating and 67 proposed data centers, and public resistance is rising on three fronts: bills, water and pollution.

Community concern	What advocates cite	What the POWER Act proposes
Utility bills	Up to \$37 billion in added electricity costs through 2050, a 24% increase, per the Illinois Environmental Council	Data centers pay for their own grid build-out; no shifting of capacity or transmission costs to ratepayers; peak use tied to new clean energy brought to the grid

Community concern	What advocates cite	What the POWER Act proposes
Water	Large sites can use millions of gallons per day with no public transparency	Water Impact Permits with public hearings, 5-year renewal, quarterly usage reporting, water scarcity plans
Pollution	Diesel backup generators run in “emergencies” and add soot, often in already-burdened neighborhoods	Tighter permitting for diesel backup; cumulative impact assessments
Accountability	Nondisclosure agreements keep host communities in the dark	Public notice, NDA ban, enforceable community benefits agreements, annual fee into a Public Benefits and Affordability Fund

Where the law stands (as of Oct 2026). SB4016 was re-referred to Senate Assignments on May 22, 2026, and the spring session ended without a vote. On June 5, 2026, Governor Pritzker paused new data center tax incentives and asked lawmakers to revisit the issue in the fall veto session. Data centers are also an issue in the governor’s race.

Local action is filling the gap. Carbondale passed a moratorium; Champaign County’s task force is drafting a protective ordinance; Galena residents have organized public meetings. Projects approved before a state law passes still face this local scrutiny.

The trend is national. Texas (SB6) and other states are weighing similar authority over data center power use and costs. A standard built for Illinois is a standard that travels.

One POWER Act provision matters directly for this case: data centers that show clean energy leadership would get faster grid connection than competitors. Good citizenship is written into the law as a competitive advantage.

The Good Citizenship Standard: practices for planners and operators

The standard has six commitments. Each one answers a community concern, matches or exceeds a POWER Act provision, and comes with something measurable the operator publishes.

#	Commitment	Practice	How GTG delivers it	Proof the community sees
1	Pay your own way	The developer funds 100% of power and water infrastructure; no costs land on ratepayers, residents or nearby businesses	Owned on-site micro-grid; fuel delivered or piped at the operator’s expense	Cost-allocation statement filed with the local utility and regulator
2	Bring your own power	Primary power comes from an operator-owned micro-grid, not the existing grid; grid is backup or export only	PTE turbofans, about 20 MW per two 20-ft containers (~1,000 sq ft)	Monthly grid-draw report, especially at peak demand
3	Clean and quiet air	No diesel prime power; move fuel toward green hydrogen or ammonia; capture and report emissions	PTE turbofans with heat and emissions recovery technology; hydrogen-ready fuel path	Continuous emissions monitoring, published quarterly
4	Be a quiet neighbor	No audible impact at the property line; baffle, buffer, enclose and set back equipment	Turbofans installed in underground vaults to mitigate noise; berms and setbacks as needed	Pre-build noise study and ongoing property-line readings against a set dB limit

#	Commitment	Practice	How GTG delivers it	Proof the community sees
5	Make your own water	Zero draw on local aquifers or municipal supply for cooling and operations	GTG atmospheric water generators plus the Water Vapor Recovery System to recapture cooling-tower losses	Quarterly water report: gallons produced, recovered, and drawn (target: zero drawn)
6	Open books, shared benefits	Cumulative impact assessment, no NDAs with local officials, enforceable community benefits agreement	Micro-grid and water data make reporting simple	Public dashboard; signed CBA; annual community meeting

What a signatory commits to before breaking ground

- ☐ Publish the site's MW load, water demand and fuel plan
- ☐ Complete a cumulative environmental impact assessment
- ☐ Complete a noise study and set a property-line limit
- ☐ Sign a community benefits agreement with enforcement terms
- ☐ Name a community liaison and a public reporting schedule

The business case

For a developer, the standard pays off in five ways: faster energization, smoother approvals, lower regulatory risk, new revenue, and stronger resilience. Dollar values depend on the site and must be modeled per project.

Value driver	Without the standard	With the standard	What to model per site
Speed to power	Energization waits on utility capacity, interconnection studies and transmission upgrades	Turbofans are modular and containerized; the campus energizes on its own schedule	Months saved × revenue per MW-month of leased capacity
Approval and social license	Zoning hearings dominated by bill, water and noise fears; risk of moratorium or denial	Developer arrives with answers: no ratepayer costs, no aquifer draw, a noise limit, a signed CBA	Probability-weighted cost of delay or denial; legal and hearing costs
Regulatory readiness	A new state law could force redesign, retrofits or new fees mid-project	Already built to POWER Act-level rules; positioned for any "clean energy leader" fast-track	Retrofit costs avoided; fee exposure under a peak-demand-based charge
Revenue	Grid power is a pure cost	Surplus power can be sold under an interconnection agreement	Surplus MWh × local wholesale price, net of interconnection costs
Resilience	A single grid tie and single water source are single points of failure	Independent power and water keep critical workloads running through grid or drought events	Downtime cost avoided; SLA penalties; tenant premium for resilience
Cost certainty	Exposure to rising utility rates and water tariffs	Fuel-based cost tied to a long-term supply contract; water cost is the AWG's energy	Levelized cost of power and water vs. utility forecast

Why act now

- The Illinois tax-incentive pause means sites must compete on merits other than tax breaks.
- Projects approved before a state law passes still face local ordinances and moratoriums.
- Tenants, especially AI and government-adjacent workloads, increasingly ask about resilience and community impact.

Who benefits

Stakeholder	What they gain
Developer / operator	Faster time to revenue, lower approval risk, stable costs
Host community	No rate increases, protected water, quiet sites, a benefits agreement
Utility	No stranded grid upgrades; optional surplus supply
State and local government	Tax base and jobs without new burden on public infrastructure

Reference configuration: a 20 MW campus

A typical 20 MW data center can meet the standard with one turbofan power block, an AWG water plant, and closed-loop cooling with vapor recovery. Final sizing comes from GTG's [project assessment](#).

System	Component	Role	Footprint / notes
Power	PTE turbofans with heat and emissions recovery	Primary power for IT and cooling load	~20 MW in two 20-ft containers, ~1,000 sq ft; add N+1 units for redundancy
Fuel	Natural gas with on-site hydrogen path, or delivered green hydrogen / ammonia	Turbofan fuel	Supply contract and on-site storage sized to the resilience target
Grid tie	Interconnection (optional)	Backup supply and surplus export	Requires a utility interconnection agreement
Water	GTG atmospheric water generators	Make-up water for cooling and operations	Sized to daily demand; output varies with humidity and season
Water recovery	GTG Water Vapor Recovery System	Recaptures evaporative losses from HVAC and cooling	Reduces the volume AWGs must produce
Storage	Water tanks	Buffer for seasonal AWG output swings	Sized for dry winter months
Noise	Underground turbofan vaults, plus berms and setbacks if needed	Meet the property-line dB limit	Set by the site noise study
Reporting	Metering and emissions monitoring	Feeds the public dashboard	Grid draw, emissions, water produced / recovered / drawn

Technical background: [PTE Data Center deck](#), [Water Vapor Recovery](#), [Open Letter to communities and operators](#).

Other risks

- **Fuel supply** — a gas pipeline or delivery disruption becomes a power outage; size storage and redundancy accordingly.
- **Air permits** — on-site turbines need state air permits regardless of emissions technology.
- **Policy uncertainty** — the final POWER Act may differ from the introduced bill; track the veto session.

- **Cost** — self-supply capital cost must be compared honestly against grid supply plus the risks it carries.

Sources

- GTG, “Green Technology Global proposes good citizenship...re: Data Centers” (position paper, provided)
- [GTG — Data Center Power & Water Infrastructure](#)
- [Illinois Environmental Council — Data Centers in Illinois / POWER Act](#)
- [Illinois General Assembly — Bill Status of SB4016](#)
- [NRDC — Pritzker suspends data center tax incentives \(Feb 18, 2026\)](#)
- [Daily Yonder — Illinois “not quite ready” to pass data center rules \(Jun 10, 2026\)](#)
- [Capitol News Illinois — POWER Act won’t move forward this spring](#)
- [Prairie Rivers Network — Data Centers \(update Aug 18, 2026\)](#)
- [HeplerBroom — POWER Act implications for developers and municipalities](#)

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