



Rodney W. Carter

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OVERVIEW

For Rod, honesty and credibility are the foundation for the strong relationships he develops with clients.

Rod has earned a reputation for skillfully steering complex business and real estate transactions to successful outcomes within the public and private sectors. Leader of the firm's Telecommunications team, Rod represents cable operators, competitive local exchange carriers, wireless companies, broadband providers, tech companies, and communications trade associations in all aspects of infrastructure deployment. He also represents developers and national, regional, and local retailers and advises clients in industrial, office, and multifamily real estate transactions.

Rod has broad experience in land use planning, zoning, eminent domain, tax increment financing, leasing, and construction and design contracts. Drawing on his decades of experience in real estate and technology law, Rod is one of a handful of practitioners who has broad experience in all aspects of the data center industry.

"Rod Carter and his team consistently deliver exceptional legal services, making them unparalleled in the industry."

— Midwest Legal Officer, Leading
Fortune 500 Telecommunications
Company

Industry

Real Estate, Development, &
Construction

Services

Corporate

Corporate Real Estate

Data Centers

Land Use

Nonprofit Organizations & Religious
Institutions

Public-Private Partnerships (P3)

State Attorneys General Practice

Telecom

HUSCH BLACKWELL

He brings to his work strategic vision and a collaborative approach to solving problems. Rod is an effective advocate, deeply knowledgeable about the law and practical in finding effective solutions to clients' issues.

Case Study

Microsoft Corporation

Our team assisted Microsoft in the construction of a \$1 billion data center on a 315-acre parcel of land in Wisconsin.

Experience

- Advised private developers, investors, lenders, municipalities, and community development authorities on land use planning, zoning, eminent domain, historic tax credits, mixed-use ownership structures, tax increment financing, leasing, and construction and design contracts and disputes.
- Counseled NYSE and NASDAQ telecommunications companies on wireless digital network deployment, including negotiating site development, network construction, leases, sale and lease-back, pole attachment, right-of-way, easement, and franchise agreements. Provided strategic consultation for the purchase/sale of communications facilities, including transaction structuring, negotiating terms, and conducting due diligence.
- Assisted companies ranging from large wireless carriers and broadcasters to local service providers and infrastructure companies through regulatory and related challenges throughout the infrastructure life cycle. Provided advice on siting rules, advocated for rule and policy changes, developed compliance plans, resolved siting disputes, and represented clients in enforcement proceedings and infrastructure-related transactions, including litigation involving the Telecommunications Act of 1996 and related state counterparts.

Experience

- Secured incentives and regulatory approval for an American multinational technology corporation for the construction of a billion-dollar data center on a 315-acre parcel in Racine County, Wisconsin. Facilitated a \$50 million land acquisition, expedited environmental review, and ensured favorable tax conditions.
- Successfully represented a leading telecommunications company in a federal lawsuit against the City of Milwaukee, securing a court judgment to install additional small cell tower facilities in the outdoor plaza space of the Fiserv Forum, despite opposition from the NBA and city officials, to enhance network capacity for the Republican National Convention.
- Represented a multinational oil and gas corporation in a land use dispute involving rail and river access for oil refining product delivery, encompassing complex contractual and federal commerce issues.
- Navigated complex zoning and economic incentive challenges to transition a property from a slaughterhouse to a data center for one of the largest U.S. telecommunications providers. Created a special zoning district and renegotiated TIF agreements.
- Assisted one of the largest carrier-neutral fiber optic network providers in the Midwest in negotiating private easements for fiber optic cable placement, relocation agreements, and license agreements with municipalities for maintenance in public right-of-way.
- Advised the USA's largest cooperative food wholesaler to independently owned supermarkets and grocery stores on variances and related land use approvals for a 1,000,000-square-foot regional distribution facility.
- Represented an international entertainment operator in the ongoing redevelopment of one of the largest water parks in the United States. Resolved code violations, facilitated property sales, and coordinated with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation for favorable access for both the theme park and new hotel developments.

Experience

- Represented a Class A corporate park in obtaining City of Milwaukee approval to add a for-profit university as an approved use, securing controversial zoning modifications and code text amendments, overcoming policymaker objections, and thwarting third-party legal challenges.
- Represented a coalition of residential condominiums in stopping the development of a proposed \$40 million music venue in Milwaukee's Historic Third Ward.
- Successfully represented a real estate developer in a landmark Wisconsin appellate land use case, resulting in a ruling that a city's exaction requirements were unconstitutional, setting a significant binding precedent for future land-use cases in the state.
- Championed a pivotal appellate court victory, securing broad preemption ruling and establishing a binding statewide precedent aligning telecommunications infrastructure development with state law efficiencies, successfully securing development approvals and overriding restrictive local ordinances, fostering streamlined infrastructure deployment in the telecom sector.
- Achieved a significant legal victory by reversing a zoning committee's denial of a substance abuse treatment, recovery, and wellness center. This pivotal legal victory overcame local opposition, tribal sovereign immunity arguments, and property value concerns, leading to the establishment of a critical regional health resource.
- Represented the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council, a nonprofit serving tribal nations in Wisconsin and Michigan, in securing approval for a conditional use permit to develop and build an \$18 million Adolescent Recovery and Wellness Center in northern Wisconsin.

Recognition

- *The Best Lawyers in America*®
 - Corporate Law, 2025
 - Litigation - Land Use and Zoning, 2025
 - Litigation - Real Estate, 2025
- *The Legal 500 United States*
 - Real estate: Land use/zoning, Recommended attorney, 2024
- *Milwaukee Business Journal*, 40 Under 40 Award Recipient, 2016
- Martindale-Hubbell AV Preeminent

Education

- J.D., Marquette University Law School
 - *Marquette Law Review*
- B.A., Carthage College
 - Phi Alpha Theta Honor Society
- American University
 - Washington Semester in National Government & Politics

Admissions

- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Wisconsin
- Wisconsin
- U.S. District Court, Western District of Wisconsin
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of Illinois
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Seventh Circuit

Community Leadership

- Board of Zoning Appeals, City of Brookfield, Wisconsin
- Carthage College Alumni Association, Officer, Board of Directors
- Marquette University Law School Mediation Program, Teacher, Mediator and Judge
- Marquette University Law School Alumni Association, Board of Directors, 2004-2012



2025 Best Lawyers