SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT

A Legal Force Driving California's Landmark Sports and Entertainment Projects

Venue work is public work. A stadium or an entertainment district is planned in front of an audience, approved in front of an audience, and sued in front of one, by opponents who need to win only once. The legal work runs from concept to opening night and then keeps going, because the challenges do.

Meyers Nave has carried this state's biggest venue projects through land assembly, environmental review, financing that had to survive both a market and an election, and the courtroom years that followed, without losing a project. We know how to operate in the public eye, and how to keep a schedule defensible against challenge, and that record is the reason cities keep placing these bets with us.

Cities are our clients first, along with the universities, teams, and public partners who share the risk. What a venue anchors is larger than itself, the districts and housing and downtown decades around it, which is why this page and Real Estate & Housing read like neighbors.

The record below leads with the venues themselves.

We've Worked on Every Type of Project

Our clients are the professional teams, private developers, government entities, and public-private partnerships (P3) whose projects define California's sports and entertainment landscape:

- **Professional Sports Venues** – MLB, NBA, NFL, and soccer stadiums that spur urban renewal and economic growth
- **Theme Parks & Attractions** – Immersive entertainment worlds and experiences attracting global visitors
- **Entertainment Districts** – Mixed-use areas surrounding major venues creating vibrant neighborhoods where dining, retail, hospitality, and residential worlds merge and transform cityscapes
- **Convention & Conference Centers** – Meeting places and event stages that fuel business tourism and growth
- **Mixed-Use Complexes** – Entertainment cities combining sports facilities, residential

INDUSTRY CHAIRS

Janice Brown
PRINCIPAL

Shaye Diveley
PRINCIPAL

ATTORNEYS

Kiana Amiri-Davani
Kiana Amiri-Davani
Nadia Bermudez
Bryan Brown
Janice Brown
Shaye Diveley
Eric Firstman
Deborah Fox
Nicole Gordon
Amrit Kulkarni

towers, commercial districts, luxury hotels, and public recreation
- **Transit-Oriented Entertainment** – Projects around transportation hubs enhancing accessibility and reducing environmental impact

End-to-End Support, All in One Place

From concept to opening night and beyond, Meyers Nave provides a full range of legal support to build and operate in California. We know how to work with agencies, operate in the public eye, and mount robust defenses to keep things on track at every stage:

- Climate Change & Sustainability – Green building, renewable energy solutions, and environmental strategies
- Construction – Contracts, strategic procurement, risk management, and dispute resolution
- Contracts & Procurement – RFPs, bidding, negotiations, and compliance
- Eminent Domain & Inverse Condemnation – Strategic property acquisition
- Labor & Employment – Advice on workplace culture, negotiations, investigations, and defending employers in disputes
- Land Use & Planning – Development agreements, P3s, entitlements, permitting, general and specific plans, real estate transactions, negotiations, leases
- Environmental Law – Strategy for regulatory approval and defense against organized opposition including air quality, CEQA/NEPA, hazards and remediation, wildlife and natural resources, water law
- Public Engagement & Political Strategy – Anticipate opposition, address concerns, and work with policymakers, stakeholders, and the public to build support, negotiate community benefits, and prevent project delays
- Trial & Litigation – Defending projects against organized opposition and complex challenges
- Writs & Appeals – Strategic, creative brief writing, and persuasive oral advocacy to protect your timeline

Let's talk about your organization's projects and goals.

Amrit Kulkarni
Adam Lindgren
Doug McManamon
Russell Morse
Camille Pating
Margaret Rosequist
David Skinner
Margaret Sohagi
R. Tyson Sohagi

EXPERIENCE

DisneylandForward

DisneylandForward is a once-in-a-generation project, the first major update to Disneyland's development blueprint since the 1990s. Backed by Disney's commitment to invest at least $1.9 billion over the next decade, the project sets the stage for new, cutting-edge immersive entertainment in Anaheim, including new rides, shopping, and dining experiences. It also includes Disney's commitment to invest millions of dollars in affordable housing, City parks, and infrastructure. As counsel to the City of Anaheim,

Meyers Nave played a central role in the complex and high-stakes approval process, including:

- Extensive legal analysis for environmental review and preparation of the Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) for CEQA compliance
- Strategy for crafting and executing roadmap for land use entitlements, including General Plan and Specific Plan amendments
- Advising and preparing leadership for key hearings and public discussions
- Creatively framing complex legal, planning, and environmental issues for both policymakers and the broader community

DisneylandForward marks a major milestone for Anaheim and California, and we're proud to have helped make it possible.

Angel Stadium Sale Litigation

We represented the City of Anaheim in pre-litigation proceedings to void the $320+ million sale of Angel Stadium to SRB Management (affiliated with Angels Baseball), citing violations of Government Code §1090. The firm prepared to challenge the deal on grounds that then-Mayor Harry Sidhu engaged in covert negotiations and shared confidential City information with the Angels in exchange for promised campaign contributions. These actions created a prohibited financial conflict of interest under §1090 while also involving issues of fraudulent concealment, ethics, and public trust. Mayor Sidhu later pled guilty to federal charges, including obstruction of justice, wire fraud, and making false statements, including deleting emails to impede a federal investigation and providing non-public information to help structure the deal favorably for the Angels while anticipating a $1 million campaign contribution. He was recently sentenced to two months in federal prison, one year of supervised release, and a $55,000 fine.

The Regents of the University of California – Beach Volleyball Stadium Covenant Appeal

Represented the Regents on appeal after neighboring homeowners sued to stop construction of a new beach volleyball stadium under a private real estate covenant with the University, and after the trial court denied the homeowners' claim for attorney fees. Read the case study.

Golden 1 Center

Meyers Nave defeated every legal challenge to the $535 million Golden 1 Center, a transformative downtown arena for the Sacramento Kings and the cornerstone of Sacramento's revitalized, mixed-use "Entertainment District," which turned six underutilized downtown blocks into a world-class destination for professional sports, concerts, and live events. As outside counsel to the City of Sacramento and its private development partners, we led the City through a series of complex and high-profile eminent domain, environmental, and constitutional legal battles that threatened to derail the project's aggressive timeline. This included groundbreaking appellate decisions rejecting CEQA-based environmental claims and upholding a special statute enacted to streamline environmental review for the project. As construction advanced, we successfully defended the City in an 11-day trial against sweeping allegations of fraud, collusion, concealment, waste, an alleged "secret subsidy," and challenges to the City's

bond financing mechanism, capping our undefeated record. This was recognized by the Daily Journal as a "Top Defense Result," cementing Meyers Nave's role in delivering one of the most high-profile and impactful public-private developments in Sacramento's history. Golden 1 Center stands not only as a catalyst for urban revitalization but also as Meyers Nave's blueprint for retaining and relocating professional sports teams and defending publicly financed projects.

Oakland's $12B Ballpark and Mixed-Use Vision

Meyers Nave serves as land use and environmental counsel to the City of Oakland for the $12 billion waterfront ballpark and mixed-use development at Howard Terminal. The project includes a 35,000-seat stadium, 3,000 residential units, 1.5 million square feet of office space, 270,000 square feet of retail, a 400-room hotel, and a 3,500-seat performance venue. Our work spans every phase of the project. We advise on the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) under CEQA, land use entitlements, the Development Agreement, and the Community Benefits Agreement. We also ensure compliance with special streamlining legislation (AB 734), coordinate with agencies such as the State Lands Commission and San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, and integrate project planning with related transit and transportation improvements. We negotiated Public Infrastructure Financing Agreements for $800 million in off-site infrastructure, helped secure state and federal funding, and advised on procurement of construction and professional services to support delivery of those improvements. Meyers Nave successfully defended the City against multiple lawsuits challenging the EIR's compliance with CEQA. All cases were resolved within one year under expedited judicial review pursuant to AB 734, culminating in a landmark appellate decision. The ruling affirmed the City's compliance and set critical precedent on deferred mitigation, exhaustion of administrative remedies, and speculative impacts. Throughout the project, we have worked closely with the A's, consultant teams, and responsible agencies to provide strategic legal guidance and ensure full implementation of CEQA streamlining benefits.

City of Los Angeles – Crossroads of the World, Hollywood

Prevailed at trial in expedited CEQA litigation over redevelopment of the Crossroads of the World site on Sunset Boulevard, a project of 950 apartments and condominiums, a 308-room hotel and 190,000 square feet of commercial space in buildings rising to 32 stories. The Governor certified the project for expedited review, requiring trial and appellate litigation to be resolved within 270 days. The plan preserves the 1930s buildings where F. Scott Fitzgerald and Alfred Hitchcock worked, and adds affordable housing and open space.

Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum – USC Lease, Brown Act and Public Records Act Defense

Defense of the Coliseum and its Commission in high-profile litigation alleging violations of the Brown Act and the California Public Records Act, tied in part to the Commission's negotiations with the University of Southern California over a long-term lease of the stadium.

City of Los Angeles – Venice Beach Boardwalk Performer Litigation

Drafted and defended the ordinance regulating performance and vending on the Venice Boardwalk against successive constitutional challenges. In one action eleven street musicians and performers sought more than $1 million in damages after the court found the noise provisions too stringent; the jury awarded each performer one dollar. In a separate case five plaintiffs raised numerous constitutional challenges and sought millions; the City prevailed on summary judgment and the Ninth Circuit affirmed in full. A third round, on remand, was dismissed on waiver and upheld again by the Ninth Circuit.

City of Fresno – Fresno Zoo Expansion

Successful defense of the expansion of the Fresno Zoo against a challenge raising CEQA, equal protection and federal grant assurance claims.

Studio Campus Developer – Movie Studio Campuses in Los Angeles and Glendale

Represented the developer of multiple movie studio campuses in Los Angeles and Glendale, including a 675,000 square foot studio campus on approximately 14 acres in the Los Angeles Arts District.

City of Los Angeles – Sun Valley Production Studio

Defended the City's approval of a movie and television production studio on a petition for writ of mandate and the subsequent appeal, with the Court of Appeal rejecting the argument that the use was inconsistent with the site's open space community plan designation.

City of Rancho Cordova – Arena and Entertainment District

Drafted the tax-sharing and land-disposition agreements for a major arena and entertainment district, structured around a layered revenue-sharing arrangement spanning sales tax, transient occupancy tax, cardroom revenue, a Mello-Roos community facilities district and an enhanced infrastructure financing district. Related work includes amending the city's tourism business improvement district to support the arena and enforcing transient occupancy tax remittance by hotel operators.

Sand City – Monterey Bay Shores Eco-Resort

Negotiated and drafted the development agreement for a roughly 1.3 million square foot mixed-use, visitor-serving resort, securing major public benefits including dune restoration and local art programs.

ocV!BE

Meyers Nave serves as land use and environmental counsel for the City of Anaheim in the entitlement and CEQA process for the creation of a mixed-use entertainment district surrounding the Honda Center, home of the Anaheim Ducks and a major concert venue. The project creates a 95-acre master-planned campus featuring sports, entertainment, shopping, market hall dining, 20 acres of public parks and trails, 1,500 residences, and offices, designed to bring people together through shared experiences. The design emphasizes a transit-oriented, walkable community adjacent to the ARTIC regional transit center. Meyers Nave helped the City complete a complex entitlement process within a

short timeframe to meet the planned Phase One opening in 2026. Entitlements include site plans, a development agreement, sign programs, and CEQA environmental analysis, requiring coordination with regional and state entities.

UCLA Luskin Conference Center

Meyers Nave guided UC on the development of UCLA's 294,000-square-foot, $162 million Meyer and Renee Luskin Conference and Guest Center, one of the university's most high-profile projects in recent years. Our team advised on tax financing, permitting, and CEQA compliance, anticipating potential challenges from the start. When a community group launched a public campaign and filed multiple lawsuits to block the project, we successfully defended UCLA at every level, prevailing in two trials and six appeals. All claims related to environmental review, zoning, and tax issues were dismissed, and UCLA was awarded $200,000 in legal fees. This legal victory cleared the way for a major university facility that now serves as a hybrid hotel and conference center supporting academic, research, and professional events.

National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)

Meyers Nave was selected by the NCAA to be one of three law firms nationwide to participate in a pilot program called the Independent Accountability Resolution Process (IARP). The IARP was established in response to the 2017 federal prosecutions in the Southern District of New York involving college basketball, following recommendations from the Commission on College Basketball chaired by former U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. Designed to handle complex Division I infractions cases, the IARP appointed Meyers Nave attorneys to serve as Complex Case Unit Advocates from 2020 to 2023. In one case, the NCAA tapped Meyers Nave as independent counsel to investigate and prosecute violations in one of its highest-profile cases over allegations involving LSU men's basketball coach Will Wade. Our attorneys led this enforcement case which stemmed from an FBI wiretap investigation into illegal payments to student-athletes. The matter proceeded resulted in severe penalties including game suspensions and Wade's ultimate termination.

Southern California NFL Team

Meyers Nave is lead counsel for a prominent professional football team on a range of high-stakes employment matters, including recent claims of discrimination, retaliation, and wage violations. Serious matters with brand-level risk. Working alongside the team's general counsel, we guided the organization through multiple arbitrations, securing complete defense awards in cases that involve incredibly sensitive allegations and extensive witness testimony. Our strategy emphasized clarity, control, and absolute confidentiality. These results reflect our client's commitment to workplace integrity and Meyers Nave's deep experience in complex employment disputes in the sports industry.

City of Anaheim's "Big A 2050" Plan for Orange County's only MLB Stadium

We played a key role as lead land use and CEQA counsel for the City of Anaheim's visionary "Big A 2050" plan, a transformative project centered around the Los Angeles Angels stadium. This ambitious redevelopment aims to transform the stadium site into a vibrant hub with large-scale residential, office, retail, and entertainment spaces, and is

designed to secure major league baseball in Anaheim for the next 30+ years. Additionally, it plays a crucial role in the development of the Platinum Triangle Mixed Use area, conveniently located next to the Anaheim Regional Transportation Intermodal Center, which offers extensive rail, bus, taxi, and other services for daily commuters and visitors. We advised on all entitlements and environmental reviews, which encompassed a Disposition and Development Agreement, site plans, tentative maps, and other necessary approvals.

Pro Soccer Stadium and Mixed-Use Development with Housing

Meyers Nave provided land use strategy and CEQA advice to Hall Equities Group, the developer of a proposed $750 million soccer stadium project with linkage to the downtown Concord BART station. The project includes a 15,000- to 18,000-seat stadium, two hotels with 650 rooms, a 150,000-square-foot convention center, retail space and modular multi-family housing. The stadium was planned to be home to a United Soccer League franchise for the Oakland East Bay area.

Los Angeles Clippers Arena Litigation

Meyers Nave represented the Consolidated Oversight Board of the Second District of Los Angeles County, which includes the Inglewood Successor Agency of the Redevelopment Agency, in litigation relating to a dispute over a potential new home for the Los Angeles Clippers. Madison Square Garden Co. (MSG), which owns the Forum, alleged that the City of Inglewood and its mayor tricked MSG into giving up its long-term lease and purchase option on 15 acres of parking space near the Forum because the City and the mayor were allegedly secretly negotiating with the Clippers to build a new and competing arena on that land less than 1.5 miles from the Forum. The lawsuit alleged violations of the Brown Act and the California Environmental Quality Act.

LABOR & EMPLOYMENT

WORKPLACE INVESTIGATIONS

National Collegiate Athletic Association – NCAA Independent Accountability Resolution Process (IARP) – Complex Case Unit Advocate (LSU / Will Wade Investigation)

Meyers Nave was selected by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) to be one of three law firms nationwide to participate in a pilot program called the Independent Accountability Resolution Process (IARP).

International Multimedia Entertainment Company – Harassment and Discrimination Investigation

International Multimedia Entertainment Company. Conducted investigations into allegations of sexual harassment, race discrimination, and disability discrimination by two senior personnel.

Audio Entertainment Company and Digital Media Company –

Employee Misconduct Investigations

Investigated bullying and abuse of employees at a national audio entertainment company, and harassment and discrimination allegations at a digital media company.

LAND USE & ENVIRONMENTAL

CEQA & NEPA

City of Sacramento v. CalPERS, et al. – Golden 1 Center Arena CEQA and Eminent Domain Litigation (2013–2015)

City of Sacramento v. CalPERS, et al. and related actions: 2013-2015. In 2013, the Sacramento Kings (NBA Team) threatened to move to Seattle unless the City of Sacramento secured a site for the construction of a new basketball arena.

City of Sacramento – Sacramento Downtown NBA Arena (Sacramento Kings) – Saltonstall v. City of Sacramento CEQA Litigation

Meyers Nave defeated every legal challenge to the $535 million Golden 1 Center, the downtown arena for the Sacramento Kings and the cornerstone of Sacramento's revitalized, mixed-use "Entertainment District," which turned six underused downtown blocks into a destination for professional sports, concerts, and live events. Two groups challenged the arena EIR under CEQA, and the defense produced two published court of appeal decisions. The first sustained the streamlining law the Legislature wrote for this one arena, the earliest appellate ruling to reach that question.

Oakland MLB Stadium and Mixed-Use Development Project

Meyers Nave served as outside land use and environmental counsel to the City for a waterfront ballpark and mixed-use development project at the Port of Oakland's Howard Terminal, including an expanded entertainment district with a 35,000-seat ballpark, 3,000 residential units, and 1.5 million square feet of office space.

City of Oakland – East Oakland Stadium Alliance v. City of Oakland (2023) 89 Cal.App.5th 1226 – Court of Appeal Upholds EIR for Oakland A's Waterfront Ballpark

In a lengthy published decision , the Court of Appeal upheld the City of Oakland's environmental impact report (EIR) for the proposed Oakland A's MLB stadium and mixed use project, rejecting numerous challenges and affirming the trial court's decision in full.

City of Anaheim's Big A 2050 Plan – Angels Stadium Mixed-Use Development and Stadium Project – Lead Counsel

City of Anaheim's "Big A 2050" Plan for Angels Stadium. Meyers Nave serves as lead counsel to the City of Anaheim for a mixed-use development and stadium project, known as Big A 2050, on the site of an existing Los Angeles Angels stadium.

TRIAL & LITIGATION

City of Sacramento – Gonzalez v. Johnson – Fraud and Collusion Trial; Marks-Roos Bond Issuance Defense

Meyers Nave represented the City of Sacramento in defeating every legal challenge to the $535 million entertainment and sports arena in downtown Sacramento.

City of Sacramento – Golden 1 Center – Mall-Site (Former Macy's) Acquisition, Eminent Domain

With the Kings staying in Sacramento, the next step was securing the ideal site in the heart of downtown. When negotiations for the final piece of property hit a snag, we litigated and won a high-profile eminent domain battle that kept construction on track.

City of Sacramento – Public-Private Funding Plan and Stadium Subsidy Ballot Measure Challenge – Keeping the Kings in Sacramento

The NBA held an option to relocate the Kings if a new stadium wasn't built quickly enough. We helped the City develop a public-private funding plan and enforce loan agreements to share stadium costs and keep the team rooted in the community.

City of Anaheim – OCVIBE First Amendment and Constitutional Law Strategy

Meyers Nave is currently advising and strategizing with the City of Anaheim to address various First Amendment and California state law issues at play with the $4 billion OCVIBE public-private development project.