

TRIAL & LITIGATION

Meyers Nave's trial and litigation attorneys handle complex, high-stakes lawsuits that are often matters of first impression

Public and non-profit organizations, private corporations, and public-private partnerships located throughout California turn to us because of our successful and unparalleled track record in protecting their rights, in trial and appellate work in state and federal courts.

Our Meyers Nave attorneys concentrate on resolving disputes early, favorably, and cost-effectively, with minimal disruption to our clients' daily operations. When litigation is unavoidable or warranted, our skilled team gets positive results in every stage of litigation, from initial complaint, through discovery, motion practice, trial, and appeal.

[Jenny Riggs](#) tackles controversial litigation and crisis management matters, leading a team with a reputation as the go-to attorneys for issues that attract intense media attention and public scrutiny, including sensitive political issues. At the epicenter of these highly charged, high-stakes litigation and crisis management around controversial matters at the intersection of law and societal evolution, Deborah Fox is and has been helping to shape California's litigation landscape for years, leading a steadfast, thoughtful, and strategic team that stands ready to serve.

We are strategic, efficient, and experienced. We handle judicially coordinated cases, multi-party and multi-district cases, class actions, and alternative dispute resolution, such as mediation or arbitration, in numerous areas of law throughout California involving, but not limited to:

- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Brown Act
- Civil rights
- Coastal issues and sensitive lands
- Constitutional law
- Crisis litigation
- Election matters
- Eminent domain – direct and inverse condemnation
- Environmental catastrophes and claims
- Federal preemption
- First Amendment
- Housing
- Land use
- Post-redevelopment issues

PRACTICE CHAIR



Jenny
Riggs
PRINCIPAL

ATTORNEYS

Deborah Fox
Amrit Kulkarni
Catherine Carlisle
Bryan Brown
Matthew Nazareth
Jenny Riggs
Margaret Rosequist
Russell Morse
Doug McManamon
Eric Firstman
Harry Moren
Kiana Amiri-Davani
Shaye Diveley
David Mehretu
David Skinner
Julia Bond
Kristof Szoke
Seena Samimi
Robyn Sembenini

- Public health & safety emergencies
- Zoning

At Meyers Nave, we pride ourselves on our litigation and trial experience and our ability to deliver excellent results in and out of the courtroom. We are your trusted partner to help you navigate the complex trial and litigation landscape in California and get the results you need.

EXPERIENCE

County of Maui – 2023 Maui Wildfires

Led strategic planning for the County's defense across more than 500 individual cases, several class actions, and thousands of plaintiffs in state and federal court, including a third-party complaint naming cell carriers for failing to timely report tower failures. The path resolved in a \$4.1 billion global settlement.

County of Los Angeles – Porter Ranch – The Largest Gas Leak in America, Answered

County of Los Angeles v. Southern California Gas Company (Porter Ranch). A temporary restraining order, and then a permanent injunction, kept 3,000 relocated families in safe alternative housing. The leak was the largest release of methane in United States history. Meyers Nave moved with the county public health department to size the County's exposure and went to court.

County of Santa Barbara – Thomas Fire and Montecito Debris Flow

Defended the County when Southern California Edison, whose lines started the fire, sued to shift its own wildfire liability onto the government entities that answered the emergency. Across 200 lawsuits, 3,000 plaintiffs, and 70 plaintiff firms, two dispositive rulings cut more than \$1 billion from Edison's claims against the County. The matter is resolved. The [full defense story](#) runs deeper.

University of California – People's Park Student Housing

So-called "social noise" – i.e., noise created by human voices – is not an environmental impact required by the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") to be analyzed for residential projects, the California Supreme Court ruled on June 6, 2024, in *Make UC a Good Neighbor v. The Regents of the University of California*.

University of California – Systemwide Long Range Development Plans and Campus Housing Projects

We have represented the University of California in many critical housing projects. Meyers Nave has advised UC on the CEQA review of a new generation of Long Range Development Plans to guide future development to accommodate enrollment growth of tens of thousands of new students on campuses throughout the UC system, including UC Los Angeles, UC Berkeley, UC Davis, UC Santa Cruz, UC Riverside, UC San Diego and UC

Margaret Sohagi
R. Tyson Sohagi
Nicole Gordon
Cristina Talley
Christopher Whitman
Erin Kurvers
Lorien Giles
Gina Herrera
Arielle Rodriguez
Neven Borak
Ian Johnson
Amrit Kulkarni

Irvine, including many housing projects.

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority – LA Metro – Subsurface Subway Tunnel Easement Jury Trial, Office Building (November 2023)

Meyers Nave tried to a jury the value of a subsurface subway tunnel easement on Wilshire Boulevard in Beverly Hills, across the street from the Golden Triangle, taken for the Westside Purple Line Subway Extension. The landowner's appraiser valued the easement and claimed severance damages at \$25,620,000. Metro's appraiser put the total at \$90,000. The jury returned a verdict of \$235,000.

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority – LACMTA v. Beverly Hills Unified School District – D Line Subsurface Tunnel Easements (right-to-take and valuation trials)

Meyers Nave represented Metro in acquiring subsurface tunnel easements beneath Beverly Hills High School and the Beverly Hills Unified School District administration building for Section 2 of the Westside Purple Line Subway Extension, which carries the line nine miles west from Wilshire/Western to the West Los Angeles Veterans Affairs Hospital.

The administration building case, over a 14,793 square foot easement on South Lasky Drive, was bifurcated. A December 2019 bench trial confirmed Metro's right to take. At valuation the district's appraiser put the taking at \$4,930,507 with \$8,889,493 in severance damages, against Metro's \$80,000 and no severance damages. The firm prevailed in both trials, and a jury returned a favorable verdict on the high school easement in July 2022.

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. As outside counsel to the City of Sacramento and its private development partners, the firm 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.

University of California – UC Berkeley – Enrollment Litigation

Meyers Nave defended UC Berkeley against a lawsuit seeking environmental review under CEQA regarding increases in student enrollment over projections in its LRDP and a related challenge to a new academic and housing project at the Goldman School of Public Policy. The firm's work on these cases involved litigating a novel claim which led to the development of case law and legislation to address whether this issue is subject to review under CEQA.

Port of Los Angeles – Pacific L.A. Marine Terminal, Tank Farms, and Pipelines Project (crude oil terminal)

(4) Pacific L.A. Marine Terminal, Tank Farms, and Pipelines Project. We advised POLA on compliance with CEQA and NEPA in connection with its preparation (with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) of a joint EIS/EIR for a crude oil terminal and related infrastructure.

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) – VTA BART Extension Project – Eminent Domain and Property Acquisitions Program

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA). Meyers Nave, including our Eminent Domain Group, has represented the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority on numerous eminent domain cases over the years for the BART Extension Project.

Port of Los Angeles (POLA) Master Plan and Project Implementation

Meyers Nave serves as lead environmental compliance and land use permitting counsel for multiple large-scale cargo, shipping and transportation projects for container terminals and dockside intermodal railyards.

University of California – Meyer and Renee Luskin Conference and Guest 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.

Port of Los Angeles – China Shipping Container Terminal Project (Berths 97-109)

City of Los Angeles (Port of Los Angeles) China Shipping Terminal. Meyers Nave was brought in to help resolve long-standing issues presented by an adverse Court of Appeal decision setting aside an EIR.

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) – VTA BART Extension – Land Use and Environmental Counsel for Long-Range Rail Transit Plans (since 2011)

Meyers Nave began the engagement by advising the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) on CEQA compliance for the BART extension into the City of San Jose.

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.

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) – VTA BART Extension Eminent Domain – New BART Station Industrial Property Business-Goodwill Trial

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) – Eminent Domain Win for \$12 Billion BART Extension.

University of California – UC Santa Cruz – North Campus Expansion LAFCO Water Service Litigation

The University's demurrer was sustained and the court of appeal upheld it in a published decision. Meyers Nave represented UC Santa Cruz against a challenge to its ability to apply to the Local Agency Formation Commission for water service to serve expansion of its North Campus, in *Community Water Coalition v. Santa Cruz Local Agency Formation Commission* (2011) 200 Cal.App.4th 1317.

BNSF Railway – Southern California International Gateway (SCIG) – 7 consolidated suits, 19 Cal.App.5th 465

Meyers Nave represented Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF), North America's largest freight railway, in seven lawsuits (later consolidated) challenging its \$700 million Southern California International Gateway project, a near-dock rail transfer facility serving the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach.

LAWA – LAX Master Plan – 4 consolidated CEQA/NEPA suits defended

For more than a decade, Meyers Nave has served as counsel in connection with development and implementation of the Los Angeles International Airport Master Plan, a \$14 billion expansion of one of the world's busiest airports, including defense against four consolidated lawsuits challenging the approval of the airport's expansion plans under CEQA, NEPA and the California Coastal Act: *Alliance for a Regional Solution v. City of Los Angeles et al.*; *City of El Segundo v. City of Los Angeles et al.*; *County of Los Angeles v. City of Los Angeles et al.*; and *Federation of Hillside and Canyon Associations v. City of Los Angeles et al.*

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) – D Line Extension

On the \$9.5 billion, nine-mile subway extension from Koreatown to the Westside, we acquired the properties the alignment could not move around, including the ground 100 feet beneath Beverly Hills High School. A December 2019 bench trial secured the subsurface rights, pretrial motions cut the school district's \$74 million claim to the \$53.8 million it put to the jury, and in July 2022 the jury awarded \$1.046 million.

Multinational Technology Manufacturer – Full defense verdict – \$2.8M claims

Our client faced a barrage of claims from a former senior executive. The suit alleged age discrimination, constructive termination, unpaid commissions, and retaliation, with \$2.8

million in damages at stake.

City of Los Angeles – Willits v. City of Los Angeles – ADA curb-ramp class action (\$1.4B claim)

In one of the largest federal class action disability lawsuits in the country where plaintiffs sought to compel Los Angeles to undertake over \$1.4 billion of curb cut construction and sidewalk repairs, the firm produced over millions of pages of hard copy documents and electronic data. The e-discovery efforts involved numerous databases and other electronically stored information across more than 10 City departments, each with its own network structure and document management protocols, including current and archived emails for more than 30 custodians, and issues involving legacy systems. The case also involved substantial motion practice, roughly two dozen depositions and two appeals before the Ninth Circuit. The matter resolved on favorable settlement terms.

Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) – City of Huntington Beach v. Newsom

Defended SCAG against a challenge to the Regional Housing Needs Allocation. The Ninth Circuit affirmed dismissal, and the United States Supreme Court denied certiorari after requesting briefing, ending the effort to stall required housing.

City of Antioch – Natural Gas Pipeline Franchise

Represented the City in a complex contractual dispute over the operation of a natural gas pipeline through the City, prevailing in full at the Court of Appeal in a published decision, with review denied (California Resources Production Corp. v. Antioch City Council (2024) 107 Cal.App.5th 481).

County of Los Angeles – Chiquita Canyon Landfill

At the center of widespread media attention, residents near a Santa Clarita Valley landfill have filed over 25,000 odor complaints with the South Coast Air Quality Management District—a volume unprecedented in the District’s 50-year history—describing smells like “rotten eggs, sour milk, and cheap perfume” that cause headaches, nausea, nosebleeds, and “constant anxiety” about health impacts, forcing families indoors. Meyers Nave brought Los Angeles County’s nuisance abatement action over the underground smoldering event driving these complaints. In 2026, the District Court granted the preliminary injunction; the Ninth Circuit dismissed the ensuing challenge on May 27, 2026, and the matter has returned to the District Court to complete injunctive relief protecting the Castaic community.

County of Los Angeles – Illegal Dumping Enforcement

Won a permanent injunction and a \$6.6 million judgment in penalties and fees against an illegal dumping operation in the Santa Susana Mountains, a result that ran on the front page of the Los Angeles Times. Supervisor Kathryn Barger called it “an important victory for communities and the environment.”

City of Pasadena – Eaton Fire

Defended the City against Edison’s attempt to pass its Eaton Fire liability to the city that burned. The court sustained the City’s demurrer in its entirety, without leave to amend,

dismissing Edison's indemnity cross-complaint (as of July 2026; appellate review anticipated).

San Diego County Water Authority – SDCWA v. Metropolitan Water District

Managed discovery and Public Records Act practice reaching more than 70 million documents, building the databases and search protocols that narrowed the set to fewer than 1 million while minimizing client cost.

(anonymized) Former CFO, medical distribution company – Securities fraud – full acquittal after six-week DOJ trial

Obtained full acquittal after a six-week trial for a former CFO of a medical distribution company in connection with criminal securities fraud charges by the DOJ, arising out of \$9 billion stock market capitalization loss following an earnings restatement. Also represented a former President of Countrywide Financial Corporation in connection with investigations by and litigation with the California Attorney General and the SEC, and related class actions.