

Daily Journal

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Development

CALIFORNIA'S **TOP 50** DEVELOPMENT LAWYERS

Editors Note

This year, we decided to take a different approach. We didn't pick a list of lawyers specifically devoted to real estate deals or municipal law. Our list this year is collection of the state's top attorneys whose work in the development arena significantly impacted projects that are helping to shape the transformation of cities.

These lawyers and the others on our list are passionate about their work, and it shows in very tangible ways.

Amrit S. Kulkarni

FIRM

**Meyers Nave Riback Silver &
Wilson PLC**
Los Angeles

SPECIALTIES

land use, environmental,
infrastructure, development



Kulkarni and his team have been representing Burlington Northern Santa Fe against a challenge to its planned \$500 million rail yard project near the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach.

At issue is the South Coast International Gateway Project, which would build and operate a rail yard for the loading and off-loading of shipping containers.

"The project is critical because it will result in the more efficient transfer of international cargo onto trains in a more environmentally friendly manner," Kulkarni said. "The project is critical to the ability of the ports to compete with other ports in North America."

The seven lawsuits, now consolidated, allege violations of the California Environmental Quality Act, among other issues. *Fast Lane Transportation Inc. v. City of Los Angeles et al*, CIVMSN14-0300 (Contra Costa Co. Super. Ct., filed June 5, 2013).

"Projects of this magnitude generate controversy," Kulkarni said. "We have to educate the court through the briefing process and trial process to understand the extraordinary amount of hard work and commitment

that has been done to disclose all of the environmental issues for this project, and why it has so many environmental benefits for the entire region."

In another matter, Kulkarni serves as lead attorney in defending Sacramento against allegations of fraud and illegal use of public funds in its negotiation of the new \$488 million arena for the NBA's Kings. *Gonzales et al, v. City of Sacramento et al*, 34-80001489 (Sacramento Co. Super. Ct., filed May 14, 2013).

"We are also defending the project against multiple challenges that the environmental review for the project was inadequate," Kulkarni said.

Recently, the court denied the plaintiff's request to join the project and stop construction, he added.

"The city worked at breakneck speed to put together a thorough environmental review," Kulkarni said. "Now it's being challenged by a small number of people with a different vision of how Sacramento should develop. We are aggressively defending this case."

— Pat Broderick