

Edward J. Casey

Partner

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Ed Casey represents a variety of residential, retail, and commercial developers in land use matters, including those arising under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). His practice encompasses every facet of the entitlement process, from pre-acquisition due diligence to permitting, and he has prosecuted and defended CEQA and other land use lawsuits for a number of major development projects. Ed has been recognized by *Chambers USA*, was selected to the 2015–2022 editions of *The Best Lawyers in America*®, including being named “Lawyer of the Year” in Litigation – Land Use and Zoning in 2020, and named a “Top Litigator” by the *Los Angeles Business Journal* in 2018. In 2013, Ed was listed as a “Top Rated Lawyer in Energy, Environmental, and Land Use Law” by The Recorder. He was also featured in the *Daily Journal* as one of the “Top 100 Lawyers in California” in 2012. In addition, he received the AV Preeminent® Peer Review Rating™ and the AV Judicial Edition Preeminent Rating™, a recognition based on the opinions of members of the bar and judiciary, from Martindale-Hubbell®. Both recognitions are the highest possible ratings for both legal ability and ethical standards.

Ed is a member of the board of directors of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce and chairs the Land Use Committee of the Chamber.

Representative Experience

Entitlement Experience

- Provides CEQA review and entitlement strategy to a national real estate developer for projects throughout Southern California, including one of the largest mixed-use (1,200 residential units and 300,000 sq. ft. of commercial space), transit-oriented development projects in the City of Los Angeles, to be located adjacent to one of the city’s new rail station.
- Provides CEQA advice and entitlement strategy for multiple developers of major residential and mixed-use projects in Downtown Los Angeles and Hollywood.
- Representing Southern California Edison in decommissioning the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (“SONGS”) in San Diego County, including CEQA and Coastal Act advice. Also represents this major utility on CEQA and other environmental matters for a variety of projects for projects throughout Southern California.
- Represented the developer of a retail center in securing all necessary entitlements for a project located in coastal zone in the City of Long Beach.
- Represented the developer of the “Grand Avenue Project,” a large residential, hotel, and commercial project in downtown Los Angeles, including securing CEQA clearance from multiple Los Angeles agencies.
- Represents developers of new and redeveloped studio projects in Los Angeles.
- Represents the real estate development affiliate of a national movie theater chain in development projects throughout Southern California, including Hollywood.

- Represented the developer of the new Broad Art Museum in downtown Los Angeles in securing CEQA clearance and other land use approvals.
- Represented museums (including the Autry Museum) and schools in obtaining entitlements and CEQA approvals.

Land Use Litigation Experience

- Secured trial and appellate court victories defending litigation filed against the “Cumulus” project by, among others, a group supporting a high-profile voter initiative calling for a citywide building moratorium.
- Successfully defended the “Martin Cadillac” project before the trial court and court of appeal, upholding the general plan amendment for an 800,000 sq. ft. mixed-use, transit-oriented project in the Westside of Los Angeles. The Court of Appeal ruled that the City has the power to issue general plan amendments for a single project.
- Represents the developer of the Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza Master Plan Project in an ongoing litigation under CEQA and the Fair Housing Act. The Project being challenged would redevelop the existing Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza on the approximate 43-acre site. The project will add a total of approximately 2.06 million sq. ft. of development, including 820,000 sq. ft. of commercial space, 961 residential units (including affordable housing), 331,838 sq. ft. of retail and related commercial uses, a 400-room hotel, and 143,377 sq. ft. of office space.
- Represented A Community of Friends, a nonprofit housing agency, in upholding approval of an affordable housing project in Los Angeles by defeating a challenge to the project made under CEQA. The project, which was opposed by an adjacent property owner, will develop a 100 percent affordable housing project with units set aside for low-income families, homeless people, and veterans, including for those afflicted with mental health illnesses.
- Represented the developer of the largest mixed-use project in the Westside of Los Angeles (Playa Vista), which is comprised of 2,600 residential units, 150,000 square feet of retail and other commercial uses. Secured appellate and trial court decisions upholding the EIR for the project.
- Represents Westfield, an international shopping center developer, in various land use lawsuits throughout California, including Los Angeles, Arcadia, San Diego, and Santa Clarita.
- Represented the Autry Museum, a major Los Angeles museum, in CEQA and Brown Act-related litigation. Secured multiple trial and appellate court decisions that allowed the Autry to use a multimillion-dollar grant from the state to renovate its Griffith Park facility.

Publications & Presentations

News Items

- *Los Angeles Business Journal* | Vet Attorney Sees Different CEQA Environment | February 29, 2016
Ed Casey is profiled in a report focusing on his track record in defending CEQA lawsuits and the increasing hit on businesses from the growing abuse of CEQA.

Publications

- *Land Use Matters*: Alston & Bird LLP, May 2020 No. 2
- *Land Use Matters*: Alston Bird LLP, May 2020
- “Ballot Blues,” *Los Angeles Lawyer*, February 2017.
- “Foreign Development Projects Must Contend with CEQA,” *Daily Journal Asia Supplement*, October 22, 2014.

Education

- The University of Chicago (J.D., 1985)
- Hofstra University (B.A., 1982)

Admitted to Practice

- California

Related Services

Environmental Litigation | Litigation | Environment, Land Use & Natural Resources | Water Resources | Land Use | Environmental Appellate Litigation | Coastal Land Use | Real Estate Litigation