

ADAM U. LINDGREN

PRINCIPAL & EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER

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LANGUAGES:
English



Clients of all types rely on Adam's three decades inside government and public policy to make complex decisions and build iconic projects.

Government entities and private businesses turn to Adam for their most complex projects, their toughest governance challenges, and the decisions they cannot afford to get wrong. Decades as general counsel and city attorney make him fluent in how public decisions actually get made, and private developers, investors, and institutions building and supplying California come to him for the same reason. Adam leads Meyers Nave's government and public policy lawyers, runs the Sacramento office, and helps shape the firm's direction as a member of the Executive Committee.

His [land use and environmental](#) practice builds great projects and communities. He moves ambitious projects and critical agency plans through California's approvals process, securing entitlements, and steering major plan updates, annexations, subdivision maps, and large-scale development agreements. From his decades of general counsel experience, he has the skills and judgment to sort out the adjacent conflicts, transparency, and political issues that often accompany them.

Adam works increasingly on projects confronting the effects of climate change on land use regulations, including wildfire prevention and recovery, flood control, sea-level rise, and landslide mitigation. Because he sees issues and opportunities from both the agency's and the applicant's sides, the same lawyer who helps a city shape its general plan can identify how to expedite a major data center for a national investor, or walk a working ranch through complex permitting and wildfire mitigation process.

Adam has been general counsel and city attorney for most of his career, and he has the instincts and long view to show for it. He has counseled one city since the day it incorporated, watching it grow from an ambitious idea into a thriving community, and shepherding its most important projects, partnerships, and advances. Years in those chairs taught him that governance is about much more than statutes and policies. It is about how the law intersects with people, politics, real-world pressures, and

EDUCATION

Georgetown University Law Center,
JD, *Public Interest Law Scholar*, 1993

Columbia University, BA, *cum laude*,
1990

ADMISSIONS

California, 1995 – Bar No. 177476

U.S. District Court, Northern District
of California

U.S. District Court, Eastern District
of California

PRACTICE AREAS

Land Use & Environmental

Land Entitlements

CEQA/NEPA

Climate Change & Sustainability

Public Contracts & Procurement

Energy, Utilities & Renewables

opportunities. It's also about helping a room full of elected officials get to a decision they can understand, support, and defend.

Adam has a clear-eyed read on how political and legal fights actually unfold, and a conviction that the best time to win one is before it starts. He builds the record early, long before a decision takes shape, so the choice a board or council makes today still looks right under scrutiny decades from now. When a challenge comes anyway, he stands with the firm's deep bench of litigators to defend a position he often designed from the first conversation to survive a courtroom, a hearing, or a front page.

When he isn't practicing, Adam is often teaching. He is managing co-editor and an update author of California Land Use Practice, the field's leading treatise, and he wrote the League of California Cities' handbook on municipal legal ethics. He came to the law from politics, beginning his career as a legislative aide in the U.S. House of Representatives. Then, as a talented and ambitious young associate, he came to Meyers Nave in its early years.

In his personal time, Adam is a hiker and an unapologetic car enthusiast, as content on a long climb as he is under the hood. He and his wife, Dede, have been married more than twenty-five years, are parents of two, and are fixtures at their local food bank and community farm.

HONORS & AWARDS

- *The Best Lawyers in America*, Municipal Law (2016-2027)
- "Top Lawyers" – Sactown Magazine (2024)
- "Top Lawyers, State, Local & Municipal Law" – Sacramento Magazine (2017, 2018, 2020, 2021, 2022)
- Proclamation honoring expertise and service – City of Rancho Cordova (2015)
- Resolution honoring expertise and service – 8th District Assemblyman Ken Cooley (2015)
- "Northern California Super Lawyer", *Super Lawyers Magazine*, State, Local & Municipal Law (2005)

PROFESSIONAL & COMMUNITY AFFILIATIONS

- The State Bar of California, Member
- Sacramento County Bar Association, Member
- Central Valley City Attorneys' Association, Member
- League of California Cities City Attorneys' Department, Legal Advocacy Committee, Past

Member

- League of California Cities' City Attorneys Department, Municipal Law Handbook Committee, Past Chair and Editorial Board Member
- League of California Cities' City Attorneys Department, Ad Hoc Committee on Practice Management and Ethical Standards, Past Member
- American Bar Association Section on State and Local Government, Subcommittee on Vested Rights, Former Co-Chair
- Toast Masters International, Past Member
- Rotary International, Past Member

PRESENTATIONS & PUBLICATIONS

- Co-author, "California Land Use Practice, Chapters 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, and 20" – *Continuing Education of the Bar (CEB)* (2026)
- Managing Co-editor, "California Land Use Practice" – *Continuing Education of the Bar (CEB)* (2006-2026)
- Co-author, "California Land Use Practice, Chapters 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 15 and 16" – *Continuing Education of the Bar (CEB)* (2020)
- Presenter, "California Land Use and Zoning: Overview and Recent Developments," *Lorman Education Services* (2016)
- Presenter, "Subdivision Map Act 101: Recent Case Law and Current Topics Impacting Development" – *San Diego County Bar Association* (2015)
- Presenter, "Administrative Hearing Procedures and Practice" – *Continuing Education of the Bar (CEB)* (2014)
- Presenter, "Overview of Zoning, Subdivision and Land Development Law in California" (2014)
- Presenter, "Proposition 218" – *Northern California City Clerks Association* (2014)
- Presenter, "Common Issues for Quasi-Judicial Hearings" – *LOCC Annual Conference* (2013)
- Presenter, "Mastering the Map Act" – *Continuing Education of the Bar (CEB)* (2013)
- Presenter, "Untangling the Web of Fair Political Practices (FPPC) Regulations" – *Northern California City Clerks Association (NCCCCA)* (2012)
- Presenter, "Rezoning and Refinancing: Municipal Opportunities for Non-residential Development" – *Sacramento County Bar Association – Real Estate Section* (2010)
- Presenter, "All You Ever Wanted to Know About Land Use Planning ... But Were Afraid to Ask" – *Municipal Management Association of Northern California (MMANC)* (2009)
- Presenter, "Rising to the 'Promise' of Transit Oriented Development" – *World Jurist*

Association (WJA), Kiev, Ukraine (2009)

- Presenter, "Development Approval Process" – *Lorman Education Services* (2007, 2008)
- Presenter, "Nuts and Bolts of the Entitlement Process" – *State Bar Annual Meeting* (2008)
- Presenter, "Land Use: Major and Minor Subdivisions; Rules & Laws" *Sonoma County Bar Association Real Property Practice Series* (2008)
- Presenter, "Show Me the Water! How the Regulatory Drought and California's Water & Planning Laws Demand New Partnerships among Landowners/Property Developers, Water Agencies and Land-Use Agencies ... A City Attorneys Perspective" – *State Bar – Real Property Retreat* (2008)
- Presenter, "Zoning, Subdivision & Land Use Law" – *Lorman Education Services; Oakland* (2007, 2008)
- Presenter, "Advanced Zoning & Land Use" – *Lorman Education Services* (January and November 2007)
- Presenter, "Hidden Land Use Fees" – *The State Bar of California Annual Meeting* (2007)
- Presenter, "CEQA" – *CALAFCO Annual Seminar* (2007)
- "Subdivision Map Act" – *Continuing Education of the Bar (CEB)* (2007)
- Author, "Land Use Update" – *League of California Cities Annual Conference, City Attorneys Department* (2006)
- Presenter, "Land Use Entitlement Process in a Nutshell" – *The State Bar of California Annual Meeting – Real Property Law Section* (2006)
- Author, "California Zoning Practice" – *Continuing Education of the Bar (CEB)* (2002, 2003 and 2004)
- Author, "Practicing Ethics: A Handbook for Municipal Lawyers" – *League of California Cities* (2004)
- Author, "What Do You Mean I Can't Build? A Comparative Analysis of When Property Rights Vest" – *Recent Developments in Land Use, Planning and Zoning Law, American Bar Association, Urban Lawyer, Vol. 31, No. 4* (Fall 1999)
- Presenter, "Zoning Law, American Bar Association" – *Urban Lawyer, Vol. 31, No. 4* (Fall 1999)

REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

Land Use & Environmental

- **City of Anaheim – Transportation Network Wind-Down.** Advising the City on the governance, operational, and policy questions raised by winding down the Anaheim Transportation Network, a non-profit transit entity that ran under a City franchise. As rising labor costs and shifting demand strained the entity, Adam is helping the City

weigh and carry out long-term alternatives, including restructuring governance, managing the operational transition, aligning stakeholders, and coordinating with City leadership, outside consultants, and the constituencies affected.

- **BNSF Railway – Barstow International Gateway (BIG).** Counsel on a \$4.5 billion, 4,500-acre integrated rail facility in Barstow, the first such facility a Class I railroad has ever built, spanning CEQA, NEPA, Endangered Species Act, and Clean Water Act issues. It is the first transportation project the Governor certified for expedited review under SB 149, cutting the window for CEQA challenges from as long as five years to roughly 270 days. Approved by the Barstow City Council on June 16, 2026, and projected to remove about one million truck hauls a year from California roads.
- **City of Salinas – Land Use Special Counsel.** Special counsel on long-range land use planning and project processing, advising on a housing element update, rent stabilization, tax questions, land use transactions, specific plans, and mixed-use and warehouse developments, with fiscal advice and litigation support that extends to public infrastructure.
- **City of Monterey – Cannery Row Development.** Advising on subdivision and vested-rights questions for a major mixed-use development on Cannery Row.
- **National Real Estate Investor – Silicon Valley Data Center Diligence.** Comprehensive land use due diligence for a leading national real estate investor weighing a proposed Silicon Valley data center and IT facility.

General Counsel

- **City of Rancho Cordova – Long-Tenured City Attorney.** City Attorney since the City's incorporation in 2003, providing day-to-day, board-level counsel on its largest contracts and most sensitive matters, from Brown Act and Public Records Act compliance to conflicts questions under the Political Reform Act and Government Code section 1090. A constant on the City's leadership team, Adam has helped it grow from an ambitious start-up into a thriving agency, evolving its governance and staffing structures, internal controls, and culture along the way. That seat has also placed him at the center of the City's expansion, guiding land use and development approvals and permits across thousands of acres of subdivision, mixed-use, and commercial projects that add up to tens of thousands of homes and hundreds of thousands of square feet of commercial space.
- **City of Sand City – City Attorney & Special Counsel.** City Attorney to this dynamic Monterey County city, advising the Council on governance, public-private partnership transactions, regulatory matters, and litigation with the State of California. As land use and special counsel he has structured development agreements for mixed-use and housing projects, guided land preservation that includes a significant sand dune preserve, and led the redevelopment of blighted commercial and industrial sites, among them a half-dozen parcels set to remake the historic downtown with new housing, office, and retail.
- **City of Modesto – City Attorney.** Six years as City Attorney for Modesto (population 215,000), running a hybrid office of in-house staff and outside counsel and a legal-

services budget north of \$2 million. There he prepared the Stanislaus Foods development agreement for a downtown food-processing plant, a long-term deal that lets a major employer keep growing in an increasingly urban setting. Adam has also served as City Attorney for the coastal cities of Half Moon Bay and Fort Bragg.

- **Bear Valley Community Services District – General Counsel.** Assist general counsel and provide strategic advice to this special district, including two separate union negotiations and helping a first-time General Manager step into the role of a public-sector executive.
- **California Ranch – Permitting, Compliance & Wildfire Resilience.** Advising the owners of a large California ranch across a range of land use issues, including permitting, environmental compliance, and a wildfire recovery and prevention strategy.
- **City of Lodi – Financial Controls & Senior Personnel.** Leading a complex, politically charged engagement, working alongside the firm's labor and employment and financial-controls attorneys to address internal financial controls and practices together with a set of sensitive personnel issues among the city's senior leadership.