

RUSSELL E. MORSE

PRINCIPAL

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OFFICE:
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LANGUAGES:
English



Russell's command of real estate, land use, and environmental law helps public and private developers build California.

Russell Morse works at the intersection of [real estate transactions](#), [land use entitlements](#), and [environmental review](#), often on the same project. He negotiates the purchase and sale agreements, leases, and public-private partnership agreements, and takes the same projects through zoning, CEQA, and any litigation that follows.

In the public space, Russell works with institutions on long-range building programs in transportation, infrastructure, and healthcare. For Los Angeles World Airports he handles leasing at LAX and Van Nuys Airport. For the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority he advises on the Diridon station hub at the center of its decades-long effort to encircle the Bay with public transit. And for Riverside University Health System he is lead counsel on the \$580 million Mead Valley Wellness Village and on the 30-year expansion of the Medical Center campus in Moreno Valley.

On the private side, he helps developers work under California's housing statutes on projects with hundreds of units and a great deal of public and political scrutiny. He writes and speaks regularly on housing law, from the Builder's Remedy and the Density Bonus Law to the CEQA reforms in AB 130 and SB 131. He also represents private owners and investors in leasing, acquisitions, and sales.

Before law school Russell co-founded and managed a real estate investment and development company and worked as an archaeologist evaluating development sites for cultural resources. That background carries into his historic preservation and cultural resources work, and into his representation of the Tongva and Acjachemen communities in two land returns, the first in Orange County's history and the first to the Tongva in the Los Angeles area in nearly two hundred years.

EDUCATION

Loyola Law School, Los Angeles, JD, 2007

University of California, Los Angeles, BA, Political Science and Anthropology, *cum laude*, 2001

ADMISSIONS

California, 2007 – Bar No. 251057

U.S. District Court, Central District of California

PRACTICE AREAS

Land Use & Environmental

CEQA/NEPA

Climate Change & Sustainability

Land Entitlements

Energy, Utilities & Renewables

Trial & Litigation

HONORS & AWARDS

- Top Real Estate and Development Lawyers, *Daily Journal* (2025)

PROFESSIONAL & COMMUNITY AFFILIATIONS

- The State Bar of California, Member
- Urban Land Institute, Active Member
- Jewish Federation Los Angeles, Real Estate Construction Group, Cabinet Member

PRESENTATIONS & PUBLICATIONS

- Panelist, "Housing Law: Significant Legislative Updates, CEQA Mid-Year Case Law Update" – *County Counsels' Association of California, Land Use Study Section, Spring 2026 Land Use Conference* (April 30, 2026)
- Author, "New CEQA Reform Law under AB 130 and SB 131: Benefits for Housing Developers" – *Meyers Nave Client Alert* (August 1, 2025)
- Panelist, "Housing Law: Legislative Updates, ADUs, Builder's Remedy, Housing in the Coastal Zone, and SCOTUS Decision in *Grant's Pass v. Johnson*" – *County Counsels' Association of California, Land Use Study Section, Spring 2025 Meeting* (May 1, 2025)
- Author, "Governor Newsom's Emergency Proclamation Fast-Tracks Wildfire Prevention Projects" – *Meyers Nave Client Alert* (March 7, 2025)
- Author, "Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass Issues Executive Order to Expedite Home Rebuilding After Devastating Fires" – *Meyers Nave Client Alert* (January 15, 2025)
- Author, "Governor Newsom's Executive Order on Wildfire Recovery – CEQA Suspension and Key Provisions" – *Meyers Nave Client Alert* (January 14, 2025)
- Presenter, "Coastal Regs/Prop 20 at 50" – *California Lawyers Association Environmental Law Conference at Yosemite* (October 19, 2023)
- Presenter, "The Builder's Remedy for Housing: What Agencies, Developers, and Advocates Should Know" – *Meyers Nave Webinar* (April 12, 2023)
- Author, "California extends eviction moratorium and approves rental assistance" – *Daily Journal* (February 11, 2021)
- Author, "[Eviction Moratorium and Rental Assistance Update: SB 91 Enacts Changes for Landlords and Tenants](#)" – *Meyers Nave Client Alert* (February 11, 2021)
- Presenter, "COVID-19 Landlord-Tenant Law Update: Commercial & Residential Evictions, Moratoria and Litigation" – *Real Property Law Section of the Sacramento County Bar Association Webinar* (December 17, 2020)

- Presenter, "COVID-19 Landlord-Tenant Law Update: Commercial & Residential Evictions, Moratoria and Litigation" – *Real Estate Sections of the Orange County and Los Angeles County Bar Associations Webinar* (October 27, 2020)
- Co-author, "California Land Use Practice, Chapter 13" – *CEB Update* (2020)
- Author, "Legislature steps in after Judicial Council removes statewide eviction ban" – *Daily Journal* (September 2, 2020)
- Author, "[Newsom Signs AB 3088 Into Law: Extends Protections Against Evictions](#)" – *Meyers Nave Client Alert* (September 2, 2020) [also published on CEB's Current Awareness Research Platform]
- Author, "[New Orders, Ordinances and Legislation Address Financial Impact of COVID-19 on Commercial and Residential Tenants and Landlords](#)" – *Meyers Nave Client Alert* (June 18, 2020)
- Author, "Tenants, Landlords Face a Patchwork of COVID-19 Related Laws" – *Daily Journal* (June 17, 2020)
- Author, "If You Fail, Try, Try Again: The Fate of New Legislation Curbing Minors' Access to Violent and Sexually Explicit Video Games" – *Loyola Law School Entertainment Law Review*, vol. 26, Issue I

REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

- **Riverside County University Health Systems (RUHS) — Mead Valley Wellness Village Project.** Represented RUHS as outside real estate, land use, and environmental counsel for the Mead Valley Wellness Village Project, a \$580 million healthcare campus that integrates behavioral health services, medical care, and social support in one centralized location, developed with a public-private partnership partner. The engagement included ground lease, facilities lease, project funding, and property management agreements, public utility easements, and CEQA review and processing of the project.
- **Riverside County University Health Systems (RUHS) — Medical Center Expansion Program.** Serves as outside real estate and land use counsel to RUHS on the future expansion of the 80-acre RUHS Medical Center in Moreno Valley, a 30-year multi-phased program guiding the Medical Center's growth. Leads environmental review for the program, including preparation of a Program EIR, and provides the associated real estate services, including the ground lease, facilities lease, and public-private partnership agreement.
- **Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) — Ground Leases, Leases, and Licenses at Van Nuys Airport.** Represents LAWA with negotiation and preparation of a ground lease for a ground-mount photovoltaic solar system on LAWA property and rooftop leases and licenses for installation of photovoltaic solar panels at Van Nuys Airport buildings as part of LAWA's Sustainability Action Plan. Upon completion, the ground-mount unit will become one of the largest ground-mount solar electric systems in LADWP's service

territory in the L.A. Basin.

- **Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) — LAX EV Charging Station Lease.** Negotiated a lease for the development and operation of vehicle EV charging stations at LAX.
- **Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) — Multimodal Station Concept.** Advises VTA on governance, property acquisition, and development issues associated with the Diridon Integrated Station Concept. The Diridon Station is the central rail passenger station in San Jose and is currently served by Caltrain, ACE, VTA Light Rail, and Amtrak as well as multiple bus service agencies and providers. The Diridon Integrated Concept Plan is being conducted through a cooperative agreement among VTA, Caltrain, the City of San Jose, and California HSR.
- **City of Anaheim — Angel Stadium.** Served the City of Anaheim as outside real estate litigation counsel related to the proposed sale of the Angel Stadium property, successfully resolving complex contractual issues with the former purchaser in the transaction. Also served as lead real estate transaction counsel for the City related to the sale of its air space subdivision interest in real property owned jointly with a private party, successfully completing a sale the City had been trying to accomplish for many years.
- **Tongva and Acjachemen Communities — Orange County Land Return.** Represented the communities in the first Native American land return in Orange County's history.
- **Tongva Taraxat Paxaavxa Conservancy — Altadena Ancestral Land Return.** Represented the Tongva Taraxat Paxaavxa Conservancy in one of the first private land returns to Native Americans in the Los Angeles area, the first time in nearly two hundred years since the California mission system ended that land had been returned to the Tongva people. Because the tribe lacks federal tribal status and was not equipped to process the bequest, provided the legal support that resulted in the successful donation of the Altadena property.
- **Morgan Hill Builder's Remedy Project — 250-Unit Residential Development.** Represented the developer of a 250-unit luxury residential project, with both market-rate and affordable units, in asserting the Builder's Remedy under the State's Housing Accountability Act. Negotiated a favorable settlement with the City of Morgan Hill that advanced the project's entitlements without drawn-out litigation.
- **Park 315 Builder's Remedy Development — Gilroy 530-Unit Residential Project.** Applying the Builder's Remedy under the State's Housing Accountability Act, negotiated a favorable settlement with the City of Gilroy to entitle a 530-unit luxury rental residential project that includes both market-rate and a significant number of affordable units.
- **Colorado Crest Affordable Housing Project — Quiet Title Defense and Settlement.** Successfully defended and negotiated a settlement agreement resolving a quiet title action brought against the client's 100% affordable housing project. The settlement allowed this much-needed project to obtain timely financing without drawn-out litigation.
- **City of Pasadena — Pasadena Retail Property Acquisition (\$13,000,000).** Property acquisition with simultaneous negotiation and preparation of retail leases, on a

\$13,000,000 commercial purchase in the City of Pasadena.

- **City of Burbank — Office Building Acquisition and Tenant Leasing Program (\$9,000,000).** Facilitated the \$9,000,000 purchase of a commercial office building in the City of Burbank and prepared commercial office leases for more than fifteen tenants at the property.
- **Los Angeles Office Building Acquisition (\$10,000,000).** Facilitated purchase of a commercial office building in the City of Los Angeles for \$10,000,000.
- **Los Angeles County Commercial Lease Portfolio for REIT Client.** Represents a Los Angeles-based real estate investment firm in negotiation and preparation of dozens of commercial lease agreements for tens of thousands of square feet throughout Los Angeles County.
- **State Farm Franchisees.** Negotiation and preparation of commercial office leases for State Farm franchisees in the City of Los Angeles.
- **Housing Law and Legislative Counsel — Eviction Moratoria and Tenant Protections.** Counsel and published analysis through the COVID-19 period on statewide and local eviction moratoria, rental assistance, AB 3088, and SB 91, for landlords, tenants, and public agencies.
- **Housing Law and Legislative Counsel — Wildfire Recovery and Rebuilding.** Published analysis of the Governor's emergency proclamation fast-tracking wildfire prevention projects, the executive order on wildfire recovery and its CEQA suspension, and the Los Angeles mayoral executive order expediting home rebuilding after the fires.