
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 a 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.

Christopher W. Garrett

FIRM

Latham & Watkins LLP
San Diego

SPECIALTIES

environmental counseling
and litigation



As California suffers through its third year of drought, Garrett is pleased to point at desalination as one of the solutions to alleviating the crisis. He led the legal effort to get the state's largest desalination plant through a more than decade-long approval process, advising Poseidon Resources Corp. on the project's myriad environmental reviews, administrative approvals and financing matters. He also successfully defended the Boston-based company in five lawsuits attacking the project.

Being both the counselor and the litigator was important to keep continuity in the process, Garrett said.

"I wouldn't know how to develop things and how things would be perceived by judges hearing the cases if I didn't do both," he said.

Construction of the plant is underway and Garrett is now advising Poseidon in its bid to build another desalination plant in Hunting-

ton Beach. He's also helping the company craft its policy response to the State Water Resources Control Board's recently released proposal to overhaul its regulations governing desalination plants.

Garrett also recently helped Iberdrola Renewables LLC obtain approvals for a 200-megawatt wind farm east of San Diego and helped successfully defend the project against an environmental challenge in district court.

As California cities begin moving toward denser transit-oriented development, Garrett is working with Kilroy Realty Corp. in its bid to create a 23-acre mixed-use town center in San Diego's Carmel Valley. He is helping the company through the lengthy environmental reviews to get the project approved with the goal that it will withstand any possible legal challenges under the California Environmental Quality Act.

—Fiona Smith