

PARTNER

Charity B. Schiller

She/Her

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Riverside

Charity Schiller, managing partner of Best Best & Krieger LLP (BBK) helps public and private clients navigate the intricate web of state and federal regulations that shape infrastructure and development projects. Specifically, Charity assists clients with all aspects of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and related environmental laws. She has extensive experience with the preparation and adoption of environmental impact reports, environmental impact statements, negative declarations, addenda, exemptions and other environmental documents. Charity is also an experienced litigator, successfully defending her clients before administrative boards and trial and appellate courts throughout California.

Site-Specific Entitlements
Charity represents a wide array of private developer clients and has assisted with the successful entitlement of many dozens of projects across California. She helped developers obtain approvals of numerous specific plans, securing development rights to thousands of acres of land. She assisted with acquiring land use approvals and entitlements for dozens of residential, commercial, mixed-use and warehouse projects across the state. She also assists several renewable energy developers with solar, wind, biogas and geothermal project siting and CEQA review. Charity successfully defended many of these projects from CEQA and land use litigation in both the trial and appellate courts, including negotiating complex multi-party settlements that resulted in the immediate dismissal of litigation while sparing her clients from litigation costs, time delays and business uncertainties.

Transportation/Linear Projects
Charity assists clients with the successful entitlement and construction of billions of dollars of transportation infrastructure, including commuter rail, freeway widening, car-pool lane additions and new highway projects. In that role, she regularly helps her clients work with federal and state transportation agencies to prepare joint CEQA/NEPA documents, secure funding for transportation projects and defend project approvals from litigation. Charity also assisted several federally designated metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) and regional transportation agencies with countywide and regional transportation plans and the adoption of Sustainable Communities Strategies under SB 375. Similarly, Charity has extensive experience with the unique permitting and CEQA issues

CORE PRACTICES

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

Data Centers & AI Infrastructure

Environmental Law & Natural Resources

Environmental Litigation

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

Special Districts

Water

Municipal Law

Ports

posed by linear projects that span multiple jurisdictions. Charity used those skills to secure – and defend – approvals for transmission lines, pipelines, water transfer projects and other infrastructure projects.

Land Use Plans/Climate Action Plans
Charity assists the firm's many municipal clients with CEQA review and adoption of their general plans, several of which have received awards for sustainability and innovation excellence. Similarly, Charity assisted several jurisdictions with CEQA review and adoption of climate action plans designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions on a jurisdiction-wide level.

Law Firm Leadership
Charity was appointed as the firm's managing partner in 2025, after serving as a member of the firm's executive committee for six years which reflects both her individual accomplishments and BBK's long tradition of women in leadership. Elected by the partnership, the managing partner oversees all aspects of the firm's operations in all offices. As Managing Partner, Charity is dedicated to fostering transparency, open communication, and strategic growth, while upholding BBK's core value of delivering excellence in responsive client service.

Beyond her work for clients, Charity previously taught environmental law at the University of California, Riverside, for 17 years and continues to share her knowledge as a guest lecturer at several Southern California universities. She regularly authors articles on CEQA and other topics and speaks at environmental law conferences and symposiums.

EDUCATION & ADMISSIONS

Education

Pepperdine University School of Law, J.D., with honors

University of California, Riverside, M.S., biochemistry and molecular biology

University of Oregon, B.S., biochemistry

Bar Admissions

California

Oregon

Court Admissions

U.S. District Court, Central District of California

U.S. District Court, Southern District of California

Accolades

- *Los Angeles Business Journal,* Top 100 Lawyers 2026
- *Lawdragon*, 100 Managing Partners You Need to Know, 2026
- The Best Lawyers in America®, Environmental Law, 2025-2027
- *Lawdragon*, The Green 500: Leaders in Environmental Law, 2024-2026
- Woman Worth Watching, *Profiles in Diversity Journal*, 2018
- Woman of Distinction Award for the 61st Assembly District, 2015
- *Southern California Super Lawyers Rising Stars*, Environmental, 2013-2014

Professional & Community Involvement

- California Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation, CEQA Advisory Group, Advisory Member, 2025-present

Thought Leadership

Publications

- "Women in Law," *Inland Empire Magazine*, October 2026 Issue
- “How I Made Law Firm Leadership: 'Build Relationships Inside and Outside the Firm,' Says Charity Schiller of Best Best & Krieger,” *Law.com*, May 11, 2026
- Quoted, ”Second Hundred Law Firms, Many in an 'Exploration Phase,' Seek Worthwhile Uses of AI,“ *American Lawyer*, May 5, 2026
- “2025 Women in Law,” *Attorney At Law Magazine*, May 2025 Issue
- “Newly Proposed CEQA Guidelines Are Coming to Your Town,” *Western City*, Aug. 1, 2018

Presentations

- “Banking on Less Traffic: New Strategies for VMT Mitigation,” California Association of Councils of Governments Regional Leadership Forum, March 7, 2025
- “CEQA Overview,” University of California, Los Angeles Extension Annual Land Use Law & Planning Conference, Feb. 2, 2024
- “SB 743 Implementation,” San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies 15th Annual San Joaquin Valley Policy Conference, May 12, 2022
- “The Impact of SB743, Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) and Environmental Mitigation: What does it mean for your City,” San Bernardino County Transportation Authority City County Conference, Apr. 7, 2022
- “Responding to Public Records Act Requests: Documents, E-mails, Electronic Records and Exemptions,” Land Use Spring 2021 Study Section Meeting, County Counsels' Association of California, May 21, 2021
- “Preparing for a Post VMT World Apocalypse,” Association of Environmental Professionals Virtual Conference, , Nov. 9, 2020
- “Do We have a Transportation No Man's Land? What to Make of Citizens for Positive Growth for Projects Approved During the Transition from LOS to VMT,” 16th Annual Advanced Virtual Seminar, Law Seminars International CEQA, Sept. 21, 2020
- “CEQA 201: Beyond the Basics,” Virtual Workshop, California Special Districts Association, July 29, 2020
- “CEQA 101: A Step-by-Step Approach,” Virtual Workshop, California Special Districts Association, July 28, 2020
- “Deciphering SB 743 - Basics and Perspectives,” Advancing Women in Transportation - Inland Empire, April 29, 2020
- “Advanced CEQA Workshop,” Association of Environmental Professionals Workshop – Inland, March 4, 2020
- “CEQA 101 & 201: Basics and Beyond,” Workshop, California Special Districts Association, Feb. 6, 2020 and July 28, 2020
- “CEQA 101 & 201: Basics and Beyond,” Workshop, California Special Districts Association, Feb. 6, 2020