



ASSOCIATE

Michael Russo

✉ michael.russo@bbklaw.com

☎ (619) 987-2691

📍 San Diego



Michael Russo is an associate attorney in Best Best & Krieger LLP's (BBK) Business Practice Group whose practice focuses on commercial leasing and real estate and business transactions, and contracts. He represents public and private clients throughout California, including cities and special districts, developers, lenders, hospitals, universities, property managers, small businesses, and other businesses and institutional clients.

Based in BBK's San Diego office, Michael advises clients on office, industrial, retail, mixed-use, specialty, and ground leases, as well as acquisitions and dispositions, license, easement and rights of way agreements, estoppels and SNDA's, and other real estate agreements. He also guides clients through due diligence, title, and survey review, and related business contracts, with a practical focus on deal structure, risk allocation, and execution. In addition to his private-sector work, Michael counsels public agencies on easements, rights of way, leases, acquisitions, and other real property arrangements.

Before joining BBK, Michael practiced at several San Diego law firms, where he represented healthcare practitioners and other various business clients in matters involving bankruptcy, business, insurance, real estate, litigation, personal injury, and transactional law. That broader background informs his practical approach to complex transactions and risk management.

Michael serves as Co-Chair of the California Lawyers Association Leasing Committee. A proud San Diego native with deep Sicilian roots, Michael is an avid sports fan, with a passion for soccer and his hometown Padres. In his downtime, he enjoys playing chess, travelling, concerts, and enjoying the local cultural scene.

Notable Experience

Private and Public Sector

- Negotiates office, industrial, retail, mixed-use, specialty, and ground leases for public- and private-sector landlords and tenants throughout California, as well as in select out-of-state matters.
- Advises developers, public agencies, and institutional clients on the leasing, acquisition, and disposition of office, retail, and specialty properties.

bbklaw.com

CORE PRACTICES

Real Estate

Business

Business Transactions

Municipal Law

Special Districts

Housing, Economic Development and Real Estate

EDUCATION & ADMISSIONS

Education

University of San Diego School of Law, J.D.

University of San Diego, B.S., business administration

Bar Admissions

California

- Handles leases and related real estate agreements for shopping centers, public facilities, airports, sports venues, and other specialty properties.
- Counsels clients on easements, licenses, rights of way, acquisitions, dispositions, and other real property arrangements.
- Guides clients through due diligence, title and survey review, estoppels, subordination agreements, and closing.
- Developed master lease templates for mixed-use and office developments for public and private-sector clients.
- Represented a hospital district in negotiating an industrial lease.
- Represented school district in negotiation of a \$250,000,000 development agreement and ground lease for a student housing project.
- Represented the City of Santa Cruz in connection with leasing for the POPS! program.
- Advises public entities including Santa Rosa, West Hollywood, Fontana, Ontario, Palm Springs, and Modesto Irrigation District on leases, acquisitions, dispositions, easements, licenses, and rights of way.

Professional & Community Involvement

- San Diego County Bar Association
- Consumer Attorneys of San Diego
- Urban Land Institute, Member
- Co-Chair, California Lawyers Association Leasing Committee

Thought Leadership

Publications

- “Damage Control to Commercial Real Estate,” Co-Author, *Riverside Lawyer Magazine*, May 2025 Issue
- “How to Navigate Trust Amendments: When Probate Code Compliance Meets Trust Procedure Failures,” BBK Legal Alert, Sept. 11, 2024
- “The U.S. Corporate Transparency Act Is Almost Here,” BBK Legal Alert, Oct. 11, 2023
- “What You Need to Know About the U.S. Corporate Transparency Act,” BBK Legal Alert, Jan. 1, 2023

Presentations

- “Considerations in Leasing With Public Entities,” California Lawyers Association, Real Property Law Retreat, May 16, 2026