BBK
BEST BEST & KRIEGER LLP

PARTNER

Gail A. Karish

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Los Angeles / Washington, D.C.

Gail A. Karish is a partner at Best Best & Krieger LLP who focuses on telecommunications, assisting clients in California and across the U.S. with a wide range of regulatory, transactional and litigation matters involving broadband and fiber networks, cable and telecom franchising, wireless communications and public-private partnerships. Gail's clients are mainly public agencies, such as local governments, water districts and municipal utilities. Public agencies can serve a variety of roles in relation to telecommunications infrastructure – regulator, owner, service provider, customer, partner – and Gail's clients come to her for advice and guidance on issues that arise in all these contexts. Gail also advocates for local governments before the Federal Communications Commission and state utility commissions. Gail's telecommunications practice regularly involves:

Regulatory Advice and Advocacy

- Advice on compliance with federal and state wireless siting laws, shot clocks and other regulations affecting individual permit applications
- Revision of local codes, applications and processes governing wireless facilities siting and right of way permitting
- Assistance in broadband planning, and in revising master plans, local ordinances and regulatory processes to encourage broadband deployment
- Advice on compliance with federal and state cable and telecom franchising laws, including those applicable to competitive franchising, renewals and transfers
- Assistance with meeting state and federal regulations and reporting requirements applicable to providers of broadband, cable, voice over IP and other communications services, and related filings
- Representation before the FCC and state utility commissions, such as the California Public Utility Commission, on proposed rulemakings, licensing and regulatory approvals, and pole attachment disputes

Negotiations and Drafting Agreements

- Cable and telecom franchises, renewals and transfer agreements

CORE PRACTICES

California Public Utilities Commission

Data Centers & AI Infrastructure

Environmental Law & Natural Resources

Municipal Law

Public-Private Partnerships

Telecommunications

EDUCATION & ADMISSIONS

Education

York University, LL.M.

McGill University, LL.B. and B.C.L.

American University, M.I.S.

University of Manitoba, B.A.

Bar Admissions

California

District of Columbia

- Fiber network indefeasible right of use, or IRUs, fiber leases, pole attachment, property access, encroachment and collocation agreements
- Macro cell site, small cell and distributed antenna system leases and licenses
- Communications services subscriber agreements, wholesale/bulk services agreements, and related policies (e.g., privacy, acceptable use, network management)
- Evaluating, structuring and implementing opportunities for public-private partnerships
- Advanced Metering Infrastructure, or AMI, and Smart City infrastructure agreements

Litigation

- Defending local governments against challenges to denials of wireless permitting applications
- Defending local governments against claims of violations of FCC shot clocks for action on applications and "deemed granted" remedies
- Defending local governments against claims their wireless regulations violate state or federal law
- Representing local governments in challenges to FCC orders preempting local regulatory authority and franchising authority

Prior to her private practice, Gail worked in-house at a Miami-based long distance telecommunications carrier that was a subsidiary of Entel-Chile, where she was responsible for state and federal licensing and regulatory compliance matters, and corporate and commercial contracts associated with the company's launch of retail and wholesale telecommunications and Internet services serving the U.S. Hispanic market.

Gail started her legal career in infrastructure in Canada at Ontario Hydro, a large government-owned electric utility where she initially represented the utility at environmental and rate tribunals. She then assisted the utility's international division to develop and implement an investment strategy, focused on privatization opportunities in Latin America, and was instrumental in the company's 1994 acquisition and management of a Peruvian electric utility.

Gail frequently presents on telecommunications topics to organizations such as the International Municipal Lawyers Association, National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors and its regional chapters, League of California Cities and Alliance for Community Media. She was licensed but is now inactive in the Province of Ontario, Canada.

Gail is admitted to practice in the US District Courts of Northern California, Central California and Southern California, the US Court of Appeals in the Sixth Circuit, Ninth Circuit, Tenth Circuit and DC Circuit, and the Supreme Court of the United States.

Gail's services are provided through Karish Advisory Corp., a Canadian corporation.

Accolades

- *Profiles in Diversity Journal*, Women Worth Watching, 2015
- National Association of Telecommunications Officers & Advisors Ovation Award, 2013

Professional & Community Involvement

- Federal Communications Bar Association
- International Municipal Lawyers Association
- National Association of Telecommunications Officers & Advisors
- Washington State Association of Telecommunications Officers & Advisors

Thought Leadership

Publications

- "FCC and HHS Seek Comment on RF Emissions Exposure Issues," *PublicCEO*, Oct. 6, 2026
- “New FCC Proposal Would Undermine Local Government Property Rights and Limit Authority Over Public Rights-of-Way,” *PublicCEO*, Jun. 30, 2026
- “DISH Washing - Force Majeure Gambit and Implications for Public and Private Landlords,” *PublicCEO*, Dec. 2025
- “CA Supreme Court Scales Back Judicial Deference for CPUC Decisions,” *PublicCEO*, Aug. 26, 2025
- Quoted “Local Officials Warn of AI’s Promise and Peril for Broadband Policy,” *Communications Daily*, Aug. 21, 2025
- “A Towering Dispute in Sacramento,” *Daily Journal*, December 19, 2024
- “Is your city ready to regulate 5G wireless infrastructure? Think again,” Western City, April 1, 2023
- “Local government telecommunications policy checklist for 2023,” American City & County, Feb. 21, 2023
- "Should You Worry About DOD Sharing 5G Spectrum with Private Companies?" *Daily Journal,* Oct. 26, 2020
- "Wireless Carriers Have Big Plans for City Streets: Are Cities Powerless to Stop Them?" *Daily Journa*l, June 12, 2019
- “Riverside County Issues RFP for Broadband Infrastructure,” *BBKnowledge*, Apr. 5, 2017
- “[PRESENTATION] Developments in Wireless,” *BBKnowledge*, Oct. 19, 2015
- “[VIDEO] Responding to the Charter-Time Warner Cable-Bright House Merger,” *BBKnowledge*, Sept. 23, 2015
- “Texas Takes Step Toward Approving Charter/TWC Cable Merger,” *BBKnowledge*, July 20, 2015
- “Merging Cable Companies List Benefits for FCC Approval,” *BBKnowledge*, July 14, 2015
- “Opportunity in FCC Review of Charter Communications and Time Warner Cable Merger,” *BBKnowledge*, June 30, 2015
- “CityLinkLA: Broadband Access for All,” *BBKnowledge*, June 24, 2015
- “The Feds & the FCC: Exploring Activities Impacting Local Governments,” *BBKnowledge*, May 8, 2015
- “CPUC Adopts Streamlined Cable Franchise Renewal Process,” *BBKnowledge*, Sept. 4, 2014
- “Proposed Comcast-Time Warner Cable-Charter Merger/Swaps/Sales Spark Thousands of Filings at the FCC; Responses Due Sept. 23,” *BBKnowledge*, Aug. 27, 2014
- “Comments Due August 25 on Comcast-Time Warner Cable-Charter Merger/Spin Off Transactions,” *BBKnowledge*, July 15, 2014
- “Wireless Industry Seeks to Limit Local Zoning Authority,” *BBKnowledge*, Apr. 1, 2014

Presentations

- "Telecom Legal Update 2024-2025," Washington Association of Telecommunications Officers & Advisors Annual Conference, Oct. 17, 2024
- "Winning at Three Dimensional Chess: Telecommunications Law Today," International Municipal Lawyers Association Mid-Year Seminar, April 20, 2024
- "Wireless Telecommunications Facilities in the Public Right of Way," Lorman Education Services Webinar, Jan. 25, 2024
- "Understanding California Utility Facilities, Easements and Rights of Way," HalfMoon Education Live Webinar, Jan. 8, 2024
- "Dialing for Answers: Telecommunications Law Speed Dating," International Municipal Lawyers Association Annual Conference, Sept. 29, 2023

- "Local Government Telecommunications Practice: The State of Small Cell Litigation and Threats and Opportunities in the 118th Congress and Biden Administration," International Municipal Lawyers Association's Mid-Year Seminar, Apr. 21, 2023
- "Update on Legal, Legislative, and Policy Issues at the Federal and State Levels," Alliance for Community Media West Conference & Trade Show, Feb. 24, 2023
- "When It Rains, It Portlands: Navigating Federal Telecom Policy and Broadband Funding Opportunities," International Municipal Lawyers Association's Annual Conference, Oct. 22, 2022
- "Legal Issues: Audit Letters, Government Code Section 1090 and Wireless Update," League of California Cities Annual Conference and Expo, Sept. 8, 2022
- "Rapid Fire Q&A with the Experts," National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors Annual Conference, Aug. 31, 2022
- "Opportunities and Risks for PEG in a Streaming World," Alliance for Community Media Annual Conference, June 28, 2022
- "The Courts, the FCC, and Congress: Will they Finally Catch Up with the Real World in Communications?" Alliance for Community Media West Conference and Trade Show, Mar. 31, 2022
- "Management of the Rights-of-Way," eNATOA Webinar, Jan. 24, 2022
- "Small Cell Wireless: Managing Local Deployments," Washington Association of Telecommunications Officers & Advisors Annual Conference, Oct. 28, 2021
- "The Everything Guide to Wireless and Small Cell Regulation," eNATOA Webinar, Aug. 9, 2021
- "Leasing and Licensing Real Property and Vertical Infrastructure for Wireless Deployment," Webinar, myLawCLE, June 29, 2021
- "Municipal Management of Cellphone Towers, DAS, and Small Cell Deployments," Webinar, Strafford, Dec. 1, 2020
- "Be Aware of Hot Telecommunications Issues in 2020-2021," BB&K Webinar, Nov. 5, 2020
- "Communications Law Update: Ninth Circuit Ruling on FCC's "5G" Small Cell Order and Other Developments," City Attorneys Association of Los Angeles County, Aug. 27, 2020
- "Update: FCC Cable Franchising Proceeding," International Municipal Lawyers Association, May 28, 2020
- "Discussing the FCC’s 621 Order," SEATOA Webinar, SouthEast Association of Telecommunications Officers & Advisors, Oct. 8, 2019
- "Telecom Update 2019," National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors Annual Conference, Sept. 26, 2019
- "Telecommunications Work Session: Small Cells, the FCC and Cable," International Municipal Lawyers Association's 2019 Annual Conference, Sept. 20, 2019
- "Wireless Telecommunications Facilities in the Public Right of Way," Live Webinar, Lorman Education Services, Sept. 10, 2019
- "Understanding and Responding to the FCC Cable In-Kind and Mixed Use Order," BB&K Webinar, Sept. 5, 2019
- "Wireless Facilities Regulation: What’s Left for Locals?", NATOA Webinar, The National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors, Aug. 12, 2019
- "Recent Trends in Local Franchising," 2019 Annual Conference, Alliance for Community Media, July 11, 2019
- "Franchising and Rights-of-Way Reform Effort," Broadband and Cable Industry Law 2019 Seminar, PLI Practising Law Institute, May 13, 2019
- "Telecom Legal Update 2019: A review of what’s new, on-going, and coming down the road for telecommunications in Congress, the FCC, the Courts, and Olympia," WATOA's 2019 Conference, Washington Association of Telecommunications Officers & Advisors, May 2, 2019

- "Right-of-way Management: Small Cells to Scooters," 2019 National Planning Conference, American Planning Association, Apr. 13, 2019
- "5G Potential + Small Cell Deployment = Big Questions," Economic Development Conference, Broadband Communities, Oct. 24, 2018
- "Telecommunications – Managing Rights of Way: The New Hub for Wireless, Internet of Things and Smart City Applications," IMLA 2018 Annual Conference, Oct. 19, 2018
- "Cell Tower and Small Cell Law: A Regulatory and Transactional Primer," BB&K Municipal Law Webinar Series, Sept. 20, 2018
- "Wireless Technology and Contracts Negotiating AMI and Cell Site Contracts," ACWA CLE Spring Workshop, May 8, 2018
- "Wireless Infrastructure In Public Rights-of-Way: Federal Broadband Initiatives and Recent California Case Law," LCC City Attorneys' Spring Conference, May 2, 2018
- "Small Cell Deployment & Right of Way Control," Washington Association of Telecommunications Officers & Advisors Annual Conference, Apr. 5, 2018
- "30 for 30 Quick and Dirty - Franchise Verbiage and Panel Discussion," Washington Association of Telecommunications Officers & Advisors Annual Conference, Apr. 5, 2018
- "How New Communications Technologies and Services are Challenging Localities," IMLA Mid-Year Seminar, Apr. 2018
- "Wireless Facilities On Government-Owned Structures in the Public Right of Way," WATOA, Apr. 2018
- "Legal and Practical Issues Surrounding Uses of PEG Funding," Alliance for Community Media Western States Region 2018 Conference, Mar. 17, 2018
- "The Hill, the FCC, and the Courts: Big Issues from 2017 and Bigger Issues for 2018," Alliance for Community Media Western States Region 2018 Conference, Mar. 16, 2018
- "Cell Tower and Small Cell Law: A Regulatory and Transactional Primer," BB&K Municipal Law Webinar Series, Sept. 20, 2017
- "The Wooden Pole – Your Most High-Tech Infrastructure," National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners' Summer Policy Summit, July 17, 2017
- "SB 649 and Local Permitting Issues In Wireless," SBCTA Planning and Development Technical Forum, May 24, 2017
- "What Local Governments Need to Know About Wireless," WATOA Annual Conference, Apr.27, 2017
- "Telecommunications Policy in the New Administration - How It May Affect You," International Municipal Lawyers Association Mid-Year Seminar, Apr. 22, 2017
- "Dealing with DIVCA: The Issues and Strategies," ACM Western Regional Conference and Trade Show, Mar. 10, 2017
- "The Courts, the Hill and the FCC - A Year in Review and Setting the Stage for 2017," eNATOA Webinar, Dec. 12, 2016
- "Right of Way Control & Compensation," eNATOA Webinar, Oct. 17, 2016
- "The Advance of Wireless Infrastructure," League of California Cities' Annual Conference, Oct. 6, 2016
- "Wireless in the Public Rights of Way," International Municipal Lawyers Association Conference, Oct. 1, 2016
- "Telecommunications - New Challenges for Local Counsel in a Broadband World: Why Public Safety, Economic Development, Planning and Zoning and Elected Officials Will Be Knocking On Your Door," International Municipal Lawyers Association Conference, Oct. 1, 2016
- "75 Answers in 75 Minutes," National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors Annual Conference, Sept. 21, 2016
- "Internet Protocol Transition Regulation and Competition," eNATO Webinar, July 25, 2016
- "Creating Opportunities for Broadband Deployment," South Bay Cities Council of Governments, July 21, 2016

- "Wireless in the Public Rights of Way," Washington Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors' Spring Conference, Apr. 2016
- "Pending Federal Communications Legislation and Litigation Affecting Local Government and Consumers," Washington Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors' Spring Conference, Apr. 2016
- "Federal and FCC Update," Washington Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors' Spring Conference, Apr. 28, 2016
- "Telecommunications Law Update," Alabama Municipal Attorneys Association, Apr. 1, 2016
- "Game of Drones: Everything You Need to Know About Using Drones," Alliance for Community Media Western States Region 2016 Conference, Mar. 18, 2016
- "The Internet of Things," SouthEast Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors, Mar. 14, 2016
- "Developments in Wireless," International Municipal Lawyers Association Conference, Oct. 6, 2015
- "How Your Community Can Respond to the Charter-Time Warner Merger [VIDEO]," California State Association of Counties, Sept. 16, 2015
- "Communications Grab Bag: 60 Answers in 60 Minutes," National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors Annual Conference, Sept. 10, 2015
- "Franchising and Renewal Update," Alliance for Community Media Annual Conference, Aug. 14, 2015
- "The Art of Negotiating," Alliance for Community Media's Annual Conference, Aug. 13, 2015
- "Pending Federal Communications Legislation Affecting Local Government and Consumers," WATOA Annual Spring Conference, April 29, 2015
- “Demand for New Infrastructure: Changing Operational Plans for Public and Private Sector Players,” Law Seminars International, Feb. 19, 2015
- “Telecommunications 101,” States of California & Nevada Chapter meeting of the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors, Jan. 15, 2015
- "Private Access to Public Rights-of-Way," Lorman Education Services Webinar, Oct. 29, 2014
- "Current Legal Issues Affecting the Telecommunications Industry," State Bar of California Annual Meeting, Sept. 12, 2014
- "Advanced City Solutions - The Future is Now," MuniGrid Conference, June 26, 2014
- "Legislative and Regulatory Panel," States of California & Nevada Chapter of National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors 18th Annual Spring Conference and STAR Awards, June 18, 2014
- "Municipal Broadband and Opportunities for Public-Private Partnerships," IMLA Annual Meeting, Sept. 29, 2013
- "Cellular Antennas on Special District Property: The Opportunity and the Risk," California Special Districts Association Annual Conference, Sept. 17, 2013
- "Private Access to Public Rights of Way," Lorman Audio Conference, Apr. 24, 2013
- "Update on Wireless Facilities Siting Issues," SEATOA Conference, Mar. 21, 2013
- "Franchising is MORE than Cable - It's Managing Rights of Way, From DAS to DCUs: Wireless Installations in the Rights of Way," National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors Webinar, July 9, 2012