



OF COUNSEL

Joseph E. Coomes, Jr.

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📍 Sacramento

Joseph E. Coomes, Jr. represents public agencies and major developers in complex land use matters and negotiation of development agreements. Of counsel in the Municipal Law practice group of Best Best & Krieger LLP, Joe's practice concentrates on land use and planning law, including downtown development and military base closure and reuse. He has pioneered the successful market-based use of redevelopment in California and other states, and is credited with creating the development and financing model, among other innovations, that enables major retailers to return to downtowns they once abandoned for the suburbs.

Joe has successfully negotiated some of the largest and most difficult urban mixed-use redevelopment projects in California, including San Francisco's Yerba Buena Gardens and downtown San Jose's Silicon Valley Financial Center.

In 1997, Joe represented the owners of Arco Arena and the Sacramento Kings NBA team in a successful public refinancing of the private debt on the arena and the team which enabled the Kings to remain in Sacramento. He also helped negotiate and structure a tax-exempt financing of a downtown convention center hotel in Sacramento.

In the area of military base closures and reuse, Joe negotiated the first early transfer in California of contaminated military base lands to private developers for environmental remediation paid for by a combination of federal funding and environmental insurance at Mare Island in the City of Vallejo. Joe represented the City of Novato and its redevelopment agency in the successful residential redevelopment of Hamilton Field in Marin County. He also worked on reuse planning for Treasure Island in San Francisco and Castle Air Force Base in Merced. In addition, he negotiated on behalf of private developers the two largest redevelopment projects at Fort Ord in the City of Marina and the County of Monterey.

Prior to joining the firm in 2010, he was of counsel with McDonough Holland & Allen in Sacramento. Joe is a frequent lecturer before state, national and international organizations on the subjects of urban development and land use planning. By invitation, he has spoken and conferred in London, Tokyo and Beijing on urban development issues. He spent a four-month semester teaching a graduate course on redevelopment and planning law at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology during a sabbatical from the firm.

CORE PRACTICES

Land Use, Planning & Zoning
Municipal Law
Public-Private Partnerships

EDUCATION & ADMISSIONS

Education

University of California, Berkeley
School of Law, L.L.B.

University of California, Berkeley,
B.A.

Bar Admissions

California

Accolades

- Land Use and Zoning Law Lawyer of the Year in Sacramento, Best Lawyers®, 2016-2018
- The Best Lawyers in America®, Land Use and Zoning Law & Municipal Law, 2007–2025
- Sacramento Magazine Top Lawyers, Land Use/Zoning, 2015
- Lifetime Visionary Honor Award (named for Joe) from Urban Land Institute District Council, Sacramento, 2013
- Exemplary Leader Award from the American Leadership Forum-Mountain Valley Chapter, 2013
- Lifetime Achievement Award from the California Redevelopment Association, 2008
- Samuel J. Cullers Outstanding Achievement Award from Lambda Alpha International's Sacramento Chapter, 2007
- Fame Award from Commercial Real Estate Women, 2000
- Lawyer of the Year by the Sacramento County Bar Association, 1996
- Sacramentan of the Year by the Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, 1990
- Distinguished Counsel Award from the Housing and Development Law Institute, 1987

Professional & Community Involvement

- American Bar Association
- American Bar Foundation Fellow
- Urban Land Institute (including Development Regulations, Mixed Use Development and Public-Private Partnership Council)
- Urban Land Institute Sacramento District Council, founding chair
- American Leadership Forum - Mountain Valley Chapter (Sacramento Region), Senior Fellow (Class III)
- Downtown Sacramento Foundation, chair
- University of Southern California Sacramento Public Affairs Center, Advisory Committee, past chairman
- Valley Vision, past chairman
- Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, past president
- Capitol Area Development Authority, past chair
- Sacramento Area Commerce and Trade Organization, past president

Thought Leadership

Publications

- “Successful Public-Private Partnerships: From Principles to Practice,” Urban Land Institute Report, contributing author and editor, 2016
- “Four Books That Should Be On Every City Official’s Summer Reading List” *PublicCEO*, July 1, 2015 (via *BBKnowledge*)
- “Resiliency Strategies for Natural Disasters the Focus of ULI Conference,” *BBKnowledge*, Sept. 19, 2014
- “ULI Report “After Redevelopment” Proposes Tools to Promote Local Economic Development,” *BBKnowledge*, Jan. 3, 2014

- “Development Agreements, Public-Private Partnerships and Redevelopment 2.0,” University of California, Davis, 2014
- “After Redevelopment – New Tools and Strategies to Promote Economic Development and Build Sustainable Communities,” Urban Land Institute, San Francisco District Council, Nov. 2013
- “Redevelopment in California” (2009 Fourth Edition), Joseph E. Coomes, Jr., et al., Solano Press
- “Practical Concerns in Drafting and Negotiating Development Agreements, Chap. 11, “Development Agreements – Practice, Policy, and Prospects,” Urban Land Institute, 1989

Presentations

- "Legacy Series Conversation," ULI Sacramento Young Leaders Group Legacy Series 2019, Urban Land Institute, March 28, 2019
- "Development Agreements, Public-Private Partnerships and Redevelopment 2.0," University of California, Davis' Continuing and Professional Education Division Extension Course, Feb. 28, 2019