



PARTNER

Gregg W. Kettles

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📍 Los Angeles



Gregg W. Kettles represents clients in litigation matters, covering areas of law including land use regulation (e.g., zoning, inverse condemnation and takings), environmental law (e.g., California Environmental Quality Act, California Coastal Act and hazardous waste litigation under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, local government (e.g., Brown Act and California Public Records Act), civil rights, anti-SLAPP and unfair competition. A State Bar of California Certified Specialist in Appellate Law, Gregg's practice emphasizes appellate work, having briefed dozens of appeals, writs and petitions to the U.S. Supreme Court, U.S. Courts of Appeals, California Supreme Court and California Court of Appeal.

Courts deciding trial court motions, writs and appeals look first to the briefs submitted by the parties in the dispute. Gregg brings a methodical approach, first assuming the role of historian, combing through the record to find out what happened. He studies the facts from the perspective of the legal scholar, to consider how they may be viewed against the fabric of the law. When it comes time to put pen to paper (or fingers to keyboard), Gregg becomes a storyteller, weaving the facts and law into a compelling narrative to be presented to the court.

Gregg's litigation work draws on a broad range of professional experiences. Gregg was a tenured professor at Mississippi College School of Law in

CORE PRACTICES

- Business Litigation
- Environmental Law & Natural Resources
- Land Use, Planning & Zoning
- Municipal Law
- Public Agency Litigation
- Special Districts

Jackson, Miss. There, he focused his teaching and writing on land use regulation, environmental law and local government. In the land of William Faulkner, Eudora Welty and Richard Wright, Gregg also learned about storytelling. He has served as deputy counsel to Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, giving Gregg a view of law practice from the perspective of the client. Immediately prior to joining Best Best & Krieger LLP, Gregg practiced law with Jenkins & Hugin, LLP.

Gregg regularly writes and presents on municipal law and litigation issues. He is past chair of the League of California Cities City Attorneys' Attorney Development and Succession Committee, and past president of the City Attorneys' Association of Los Angeles County.

Notable Experience

- Represented public agencies in action challenging application of endangered species habitat conservation plan as a taking. Secured stay of federal jurisdiction under the Pullman doctrine, and prevailed on appeal to the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.
- Represented city in civil rights action challenging city's code enforcement activities. Won appeal of summary judgment ruling in favor of city on grounds of qualified immunity.
- Represented city in action challenging issuance of conditional use permit and certificate of occupancy to residential condominium development project on ground that development was inconsistent with city zoning. Won dismissal of lawsuit.
- Represented public agency in action challenging agency's application of rent control ordinance to certain properties. Won reversal of adverse trial court ruling on appeal.
- Represented city in action challenging the city's affordable housing in-lieu fee and inclusionary zoning ordinance as a taking and an illegal exaction under the federal and state constitutions. Won dismissal of lawsuit at trial and held on to victory on appeal.
- Represented a joint powers authority in action challenging plan to spend special tax revenues, mitigation fees and other use-restricted funds on a major public infrastructure project. Won dismissal of lawsuit.
- Represented city in action challenging a city ordinance banning the retail sale of fur clothing, believed to be the first ordinance of its kind in the United States. Won dismissal of lawsuit filed in federal court for violation of equal protection and due process. Won dismissal of second lawsuit filed in state court under theories that ordinance was preempted by state laws protecting fish and wildlife and was ultra vires under the state Constitution.

EDUCATION & ADMISSIONS

Education

Yale Law School, J.D.

Washington and Lee University,
B.A.

Bar Admissions

California

Colorado

District of Columbia

LANGUAGES

English

Accolades

- IMLA Amicus Service Award, 2024
- The Best Lawyers in America®, Appellate Practice, 2022–2025

Professional & Community Involvement

- City Attorneys' Association of Los Angeles County, Board secretary
- League of California Cities, City Attorney's Department, Development and Succession Committee, 2019-2020

Thought Leadership

Publications

- “The Revolution that Wasn’t: U.S. Supreme Court Refuses to Rear California Court of Appeal Case Upholding Inclusionary Zoning in West Hollywood,” California Lawyers Association, Real Property Law Section, E-Bulletin, February 2018
- “Local Legislation to Prevent Cruelty to Animals: Three and a Half Case Studies in Preemption,” League Of California Cities Annual Conference, October 2015

Presentations

- “City Attorney Escape Room: Packaging Legal Advice for Non-Attorney Clients,” League of California Cities City Attorneys' Conference, May 7, 2021
- “Essential Skills: Developing the City Attorney and City Council Relationship,” League of California Cities' City Attorneys' Spring Conference, May 8, 2019
- “The West Hollywood Case and Recent Challenges to Inclusionary Zoning Ordinances,” Argent Communications Group's 5th Annual California Land Use Law & Policy Conference, Mar. 18, 2019
- “Anti-SLAPP: Nuts and Bolts,” City Attorneys' Association of Los Angeles County, Oct. 26, 2017
- “Sharing and Spear Catching: The Down and Dirty on Fees, Dedications, and Exactions,” State Bar of California, Real Property Law Section, 36th Annual Section Retreat, Apr. 21, 2017