



CGS3
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Craig Swanson

Partner

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When it comes to keeping focused on the issues that matter, Craig Swanson is the attorney you want at your side.

As one of the leading shopping center redevelopment lawyers in the United States, Craig takes a practical approach to completing even the most complex deals. He is well-versed in anticipating and addressing the needs of his clients in all aspects of commercial real estate transactions, working smart, concentrating on what is important, and drafting agreements succinctly.

With more than 35 years of experience, Craig specializes in the acquisition, disposition, development, leasing, and financing of shopping centers and commercial and mixed-use projects. His legal strategies for helping developers respond to space limitations through creative air rights agreements, converting anchor stores into mixed-use retail spaces, and identifying opportunities for "big box" stores to expand into urban neighborhoods reflect a combination of creative legal strategy, innovative business thinking, and pragmatism. With a client list that includes some of the nation's leading real estate companies, Craig has extensive experience representing developers, from individuals to national corporations, in drafting and negotiating CC&Rs for industrial/business parks and reciprocal easement agreements (REAs) for shopping centers. His expertise also encompasses a broad range of leasing issues, representing both landlords and tenants.

Prior to founding CGS3, Craig was a partner at Allen Matkins. His expertise in the industry is well recognized, and he has been a speaker at national events for ICSC events, including the organization's US Shopping Center Law Conference.

Education

- J.D., University of San Diego, *magna cum laude*
- B.A., Business Administration, University of San Diego

Admissions

- California

Involvement

- ICSC, San Diego Chapter
- NAIOP, San Diego Chapter

Notable Deals/Cases

- Represented the developer in connection with the redevelopment of the Westfield Valley Fair shopping center in San Jose/Santa Clara. The redevelopment involved the construction of a Bloomingdale's store on top of a newly constructed underground parking lot with another parking lot on top of the store. This involved creating an air-rights parcel for Bloomingdales, as the developer retained ownership of the underground parking lot and the parking lot above the Bloomingdale's store, along with creating access and support easements.
- Represented the developer in connection with the redevelopment of the Westfield UTC shopping center in San Diego. The redevelopment involved the relocation of an existing Nordstrom store to a new store built on top of a newly constructed parking deck owned the developer. This structure required a property swap, with Nordstrom conveying its existing store to the developer, and the developer creating an air-rights parcel over the parking deck and conveying the air-rights parcel to Nordstrom, together with creating access and support easements.
- Represented the developer in connection with build-to-suit leases for a Costco store at the Westfield Wheaton shopping center in Wheaton, Maryland, and the Westfield Sarasota Square shopping center in Sarasota, Florida. In each case, the developer acquired the interest of a closed department store at the shopping center, razed the existing department store, and constructed a new store for Costco featuring a primary entrance within the enclosed mall.

Accolades

- "Best Lawyers – San Diego," Real Estate Law, *The Best Lawyers in America* (2019-2023)
- "Top Lawyers," Real Estate, *San Diego Magazine* (2017, 2021)
- "Top 100 Influential Leaders in San Diego," *The Daily Transcript* (2016)
- "San Diego's Best Attorneys," *SD Metro Magazine* (2016)
- AV Preeminent Rating, Real Estate, Martindale-Hubbell