



Ashley E. Breakfield

Partner

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Ashley Breakfield represents large-scale urban developers, real estate investors, renewable energy companies, and private property owners in sophisticated land use and real estate matters.

In the land use realm, Ashley specializes in advising clients on Bay Area mid-scale project development strategies, beginning at the project's inception with evaluating a site for possible uses and strategizing on development plans. She then works to shepherd the project through the administrative process, including evaluating, negotiating and obtaining permits and other entitlements and administrative approvals, and counseling clients on environmental review under both CEQA and NEPA.

In the commercial real estate aspect of her practice, Ashley's transactional background is equally extensive. Her experience includes counseling developers and real estate investors with acquisitions, dispositions, and leasing of office, industrial, retail, mixed use, and agricultural real estate. In addition, Ashley's real estate practice includes significant experience counseling clients on the negotiation and documentation of various financial arrangements, including acquisition, construction, mezzanine, and permanent financing.

Prior to joining Farella's Real Estate Industry Group, Ashley was a member of our Environmental Law practice group. In that role, she counseled clients on regulatory and compliance matters involving state and federal environmental, land use, and natural resources laws and statutes, and represented clients in state and federal court, as well as before various administrative agencies and boards. This experience is frequently an integral part of her real estate work.

Ashley's approach to her practice is forthright, practical, and results-oriented. Personable and straightforward, she is skilled at negotiating and communicating, emphasizing that both parties would like to get a deal done, and striving, whenever possible, to collaborate in the interest of getting to "yes" a little faster. Combined with her deep, firsthand knowledge of the ins and outs of the Bay Area real estate market, she's an effective and persuasive advocate for her client's interests.

Ashley served as a judicial extern for the Honorable Edward M. Chen of the United States District Court, Northern District of California, and as a legal intern for the California Attorney General's Office – Natural Resources Section and the Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment.

Distinctions

- Bisnow Northern California Women Leading Real Estate Award (2024)
- *Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch® in America*, Land Use and Zoning Law (2023-2024)
- The Lawdragon Green 500: Leaders in Environmental Law (2023-2025)
- Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD) Pathfinders (Class of 2022)
- *Super Lawyers'* Northern California Rising Stars (2015-2021)

Memberships and Affiliations

- President, Commercial Real Estate Women of San Francisco (CREW SF) (2024)

Services

- Real Estate
- Land Use / Development
- Environmental Law
- Natural Resource Protection
- Renewable Energy
- Wine

Education

- University of California College of the Law, San Francisco (formerly UC Hastings) (J.D., 2011)
 - *cum laude*; Editor in Chief, *Hastings West-Northwest Journal of Environmental Law and Policy*
- University of California, Santa Cruz (B.A., 2008)
 - with highest honors

Bar Admissions

- California

- Board of Directors, Commercial Real Estate Women of San Francisco (CREW SF) (2022-present)
- Board of Directors and Minority Bar Coalition Liaison, Bar Association of San Francisco (2021-2022)
- Member, Diversity & Inclusion Task Force, CREW Network (2020-2021)
- Co-Chair, Minority Bar Coalition of the San Francisco Bay Area (2019-2022)
- Member, BALIF
- Volunteer, Californians Advancing Civic Education
- Member, San Francisco Bay Area Planning and Urban Research Association (SPUR)

Publications

July 27, 2023

Downtown San Francisco Adaptive Reuse Legislation Slated To Go Into Effect

May 12, 2023

Office-to-Housing Conversion: State and Local Efforts to Revitalize the Downtown

The Registry

May 9, 2023

San Francisco Planning Commission Endorses Ordinances to Incentivize Adaptive Reuse in Downtown

March 6, 2023

Office-to-Housing Conversion: Legislation – California’s Next Frontier

May 11, 2021

Returning to the Office: Legal and Practical Considerations for Keeping Your Team Safe

Real Estate Industry Education Series

April 23, 2021

California Court of Appeal Upholds Validity of SB 35 to Streamline Approval of Affordable Housing Projects

November 1, 2019

Downtown Oakland Slated for Increased Development

May 20, 2019

Keeping Tabs on Energy Efficiency – New Benchmarking Requirements for San Francisco

8/2/2018

San Francisco’s HOME-SF Density Bonus Program: Three Key Changes Important to Developers

9/27/2017

California Legislature Responds to the State’s Housing Crisis With Increased Funding, Streamlining, and Enforcement

5/10/2017

Stability For Calif. Cap-And-Trade Program, For Now

4/4/2017

How to Effectively Manage Vapor Intrusion Risks When Acquiring and Developing Property

2/24/2016

Preemption Defense: Is Inaction by the FDA Enough?

6/18/2015

California Supreme Court Upholds Validity of Inclusionary Housing Ordinances

6/1/2015

Troubled Waters: Clean Water Act Jurisdiction Remains Muddled After New Rule Issued

September 2012

Securing Land for Large-Scale Solar

4/9/2012

The Challenges of Developing Utility-Scale Renewable Energy Projects on Land Under Williamson Act Contracts

Outside the Office

Originally from New Jersey, Ashley is a loyal New York Football Giants fan, and as a former soccer player she's also an avid U.S. Women's National Soccer Team and National Women's Soccer League supporter. In her free time, Ashley is most likely to be found on a bike (either the Peloton that goes nowhere or the road bike she rode for 7 days and 545 miles on the 2022 AIDS/LifeCycle), hiking through the Bay Area with her wife, daughter, and two dogs, or trying out new recipes in the kitchen.

