

SPRING 2018

Our City

BUSINESS, REAL ESTATE & POLITICS

SAN DIEGO



Dentons is situated in the Golden Triangle, the apex of San Diego's biotech and technology hub.

SAN DIEGO'S

20 MOST IMPORTANT

We identify the firms that have the biggest impact on the local business and real estate communities.

BY TYLER ROBERTS

Law Firms

It's Petco Park on a summer evening. The sun is going down, and the field lights buzz. Robert Frances, managing partner of Latham & Watkins, is sitting in the stands with his family.

Like so many others in San Diego, Frances loves Petco Park. He loves how it brings the community together. He loves how it brings him to downtown. He loves the investment in San Diego's economic future that it represents.

He, like many others, feels a sense of hometown pride. But Frances also feels another kind of pride, one of a job well done. As a lawyer, he had the opportunity to work with the Padres and JMI Realty to bring Petco Park to life.

"I am fortunate to work on projects that bring so much to the San Diego community," Frances said. "It is a great feeling to sit in the stadium and see the community come together."

Petco Park is just one of Latham & Watkins' high-profile clients. The firm provided counsel during the development of the Omni San Diego Hotel and the Kimpton Solamar Hotel downtown, as well as during the refinancing of The Lodge at Torrey Pines.

Now, Frances is representing FS Investors in its attempt to bring a Major League Soccer team to the city, a \$4 billion project that would redevelop the Qualcomm Stadium site with a hotel, an entertainment center,

Robert Frances,
managing partner at
Latham & Watkins



office and residential space and a 55-acre river park.

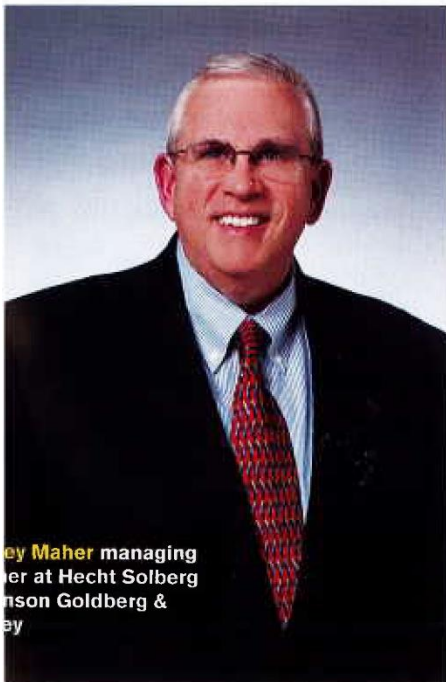
As Frances' experience suggests, every major real estate development, every business deal and every city project need lawyers to make deals and help move things along as quickly as possible. Lawyers navigate land use issues, construction financing, power plant development, environmental issues and other equally complex transactions.

Latham & Watkins, a national powerhouse, is one of 20 law firms that have the biggest effect on the local economy. To identify the area's most important law firms, Our City reviewed data and spoke with experts to assess each firm's influence, as well as to learn whether other firms recommend them.

The result is a mix of firms, both large and small, that handle real estate, business, labor and other issues that affect business and real estate in San Diego County.

While many of the firms are well known, the market has changed during the years and continues to do so.

Mickey Maher, managing partner at Hecht Solberg Robinson Goldberg & Bagley, has had a front-row seat to the evolving legal needs of San Diego's business and



Mickey Maher managing
partner at Hecht Solberg
Robinson Goldberg &
Bagley

1 Allen Matkins Leck Gamble Mallory & Natsis

San Diego attorneys: 23

Allen Matkins

Allen Matkins is a California law firm that specializes in real estate, litigation, labor, tax and business law. The firm has been serving clients from San Francisco to San Diego for more than 40 years. In San Diego, the firm's attorneys have been instrumental in helping clients navigate real estate matters and transactions. The firm describes its approach to client service as "market-aware and result-oriented."

2 CGS3

San Diego attorneys: 18



CGS3 was founded just five years ago, but the firm is already making a big name for itself. CGS3 has a deep bench of partner-level lawyers who pride themselves on market expertise. The law firm has worked with a range of local, regional and national clients. Liberty Station, Westfield UTC and the Sempra Energy headquarters are just a few local projects CGS3 attorneys have worked on.

3 Cooley

San Diego attorneys: 104



Cooley was the first Silicon Valley law firm to open a branch office in San Diego. This was in 1992, right after the firm helped Qualcomm through its IPO. Cooley's attorneys include multiple experts in technology, life sciences, mergers and acquisitions and real estate.

4 Dentons

San Diego attorneys: 26



Dentons is situated in the Golden Triangle, the apex of San Diego's biotech and technology hub. The law firm works at the leading edge of San Diego's growth and development, ushering it into the future as a major economic market, technology hub and tourist destination. The firm's services range from litigation and appeals to real estate transactions and financing. Dentons also serves clients in the growing biotech field through its intellectual property practices.

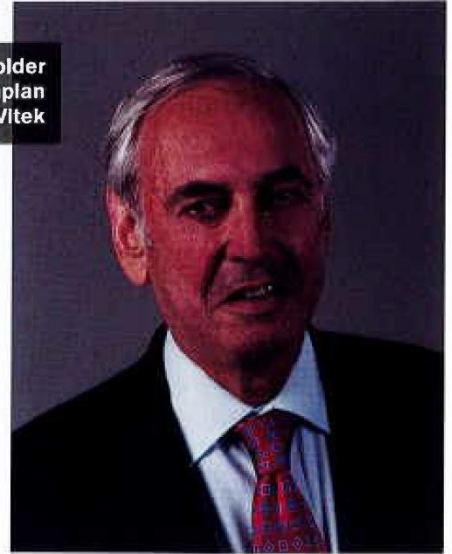
5 DLA Piper

San Diego attorneys: 98



DLA Piper is a global law firm with offices in more than 30 countries, but its San Diego roots date back to 1927 with the establishment of Gray, Cary, Ames & Driscoll. Throughout its history, the firm's lawyers have had a significant effect on San Diego. Gordon Gray helped found the Zoological Society of San Diego, and Jay Rains helped bring the U.S. Open to Torrey Pines. DLA Piper currently serves an array of San Diego companies, from startups to multinational companies.

**Robert Caplan, shareholder
& president, Seltzer Caplan
McMahon Vitek**



6 Fish & Richardson

San Diego attorneys: 34

FISH.
FISH & RICHARDSON

Fish attorneys defended clients in 172 patent cases in 2017. That's about 100 cases more than its nearest competitor, earning it a reputation as the top patent litigation firm in the U.S. Of course, these are national statistics, but its San Diego office enjoys a similar reputation on the local level, helping clients succeed in high-stakes, bet-the-company lawsuits.

7 Gordon Rees Scully Mansukhani

San Diego attorneys: 110

GORDON&REES
SCULLY MANSUKHANI

The attorneys of Gordon Rees represent corporate clients, officers and directors in litigation and transactional matters. The law firm has handled bet-the-company trials for some of the region's largest businesses, but its clients range from Fortune 500 companies to biotech startups. With more than 200 attorneys, Gordon Rees' San Diego office, which opened in 1990, covers every practice discipline and every industry.

8 Hecht Solberg Robinson Goldberg & Bagley

San Diego attorneys: 16

HechtSolberg

Hecht Solberg has been serving the real estate and business communities of Southern California since its founding more than 45 years ago. The law firm was instrumental in establishing the first master-planned communities in San Diego in the early 1970s and has expanded its practice to cover all aspects of real estate development and investment. Hecht Solberg works with a variety of clients in San Diego real estate, including entrepreneurs, developers, investors and corporations.

9 Higgs Fletcher & Mack

San Diego attorneys: 75

HFM | HIGGS
FLETCHER
& MACK

Higgs Fletcher & Mack, established in 1939, is San Diego's oldest law firm. The firm has more than 75 attorneys on staff, representing clients in 23 practice areas related to technology, immigration, health care and intellectual property. In 2017, the firm had 21 attorneys recognized as San Diego "Super Lawyers" and "Rising Stars."

10 Knobbe Martens

San Diego attorneys: 63

Knobbe Martens

Knobbe Martens is one of the top intellectual property firms in the U.S., with many national distinctions to its name. The firm's office in Del Mar Heights enjoys similar distinction in San Diego. Opened in 1984, the San Diego office has more than 60 lawyers and patent scientists who advise clients in the biotech, medical device, health sciences and electronics industries on a variety of technical legal matters related to patents, trademarks and licensing.

11 Latham & Watkins

San Diego attorneys: 87

LATHAM & WATKINS

Since its San Diego office opened in 1980, lawyers at Latham & Watkins have leveraged the firm's industry expertise to provide innovative legal solutions and sound commercial advice to San Diego companies and multinational corporations. Latham works with public and private corporations at all stages of development, from startups to mature public companies. Latham also represents venture funds, private equity investors and investment banks in transactions for companies in San Diego and around the world.

12 Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky & Popeo

San Diego attorneys: 56

MINTZ LEVIN
Mintz Levin Cohn Ferris Glovsky and Popeo PC

Mintz Levin established its San Diego office in 2006 with just five attorneys. The office now has more than 50 attorneys and 100 employees who support San Diego clients in a variety of intellectual property, corporate, real estate and employment issues. The law firm works alongside San Diego's innovators, providing legal counsel to incubators such as EvoNexus, the Zahn Innovation Platform Launchpad at San Diego State University and The Basement at UC San Diego.

real estate. Maher began representing developers for the Rancho Bernardo community nearly 30 years ago.

"There's just not many of those types of neighborhoods," Maher said. "Folks who still develop single-family homes trended toward publicly traded companies. The in-fill developers tend to be more entrepreneurial. Land use, without question, is the biggest challenge to San Diego today."

Robert Caplan, shareholder and president of Seltzer Caplan McMahon Vitek, could drive almost anywhere in San Diego County and point out a project his firm has worked on. When he got his start in the 1960s, Caplan worked primarily with developers of single-family homes. There was new land to develop, and the population was growing.

As demand for housing grew, developers became more entrepreneurial, Caplan said. High-rise apartment buildings and mixed-use developments grew in popularity. Through the decades, he's seen firsthand how San Diego's housing needs shifted, and the market pivoted, and so did legal services.

"The risk element in building a high-rise is infinitely greater than a single-family-home community," Caplan explained. "You can't sell just a few units and wait to finance the rest of the project."

Although it continues to take on new business, Caplan said the 70-year-old firm has enjoyed many long-term relationships with clients committed to building the city's future.

"We like being of service to everybody who does business or wants to do business here in the San Diego community," Caplan said. "We are just a local law firm with one

CGS3 (Crosble Gliner Schiffman Southard & Swanson LLP)

location, so our success depends on representing clients involved in San Diego.”

And this includes pro bono clients. Caplan has assisted cultural institutions such as the San Diego Symphony and the Museum of Contemporary Art. Seltzer Caplan tries to create a culture of giving back to the community, Caplan said.

Local law firms have also supported San Diego businesses through the tech boom of the 2000s and the rapid growth of the life sciences industry since then. Many firms are currently poised to help with the emerging cannabis industry.

However, legal services are not exactly a booming industry in San Diego, said Larry Watanabe, a legal recruiter at Watanabe Nason & Schwartz. In terms of growth, San Diego falls far behind markets such as Houston, Dallas, San Francisco and Boston. Watanabe, who was instrumental in bringing national law firms to San Diego in the 2000s, has watched as some of the largest have left the region.

“There just isn’t the industry here to support Big Law partner fees,” Watanabe said.

Aside from Qualcomm and a few other companies, most local and regional businesses are priced out of the \$1,200-per-hour partner billing rate charged by large international law firms.



Watanabe has worked with lawyers who, over time, left those Big Law firms to join firms that worked with local and regional clients. Firms such as Latham & Watkins; Procopio; Dentons; and Pillsbury are still national, but they have more flexible fee structures, Watanabe explained, making legal representation more affordable for San

Diego clients.

Eric Kremer, managing partner at Pillsbury, said his position allows him to serve regional client and tackle some of San Diego’s most pressing issues. Describing San Diego’s geographical limitations – surrounded by an international border, a military base, the desert and the Pacific Ocean – Kremer said



Eric Kremer, managing partner, Pillsbury

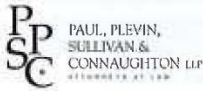
13 Morrison Foerster**San Diego attorneys: 38****MORRISON
FOERSTER**

The law office of Morrison Foerster offers a full range of legal services for every phase of a company's growth cycle. Clients include private and public companies that span the gamut of San Diego's economy. The firm's attorneys advise investors, emerging companies and public companies on corporate finance matters. Its intellectual property lawyers are pioneers in biotech and life sciences. And its litigation team provides commercial litigation across a variety of issues affecting San Diego industry.

14 Noonan Lance Boyer & Banach**San Diego attorneys: 6**


Noonan Lance
Noonan Lance Boyer & Banach LLP

Noonan Lance is known for its work in complex business litigation where the client's survival may be at risk. In 2018, U.S. News & World Report and Best Lawyers ranked Noonan Lance among their "Best Law Firms." Want to know something equally as impressive? David Noonan, James Lance and Ethan Boyer all received recognition in the 2018 edition of Best Lawyers.

15 Paul Plevin Sullivan & Connaughton**San Diego attorneys: 29**


PPSC
PAUL PLEVIN,
SULLIVAN &
CONNAUGHTON LLP
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Formed in 1998, Paul Plevin is one of California's top management-side labor and employment law firms. The firm's attorneys handle a variety of case related to issues such as discrimination, harassment, wrongful termination and union management. Paul Plevin has received a number of awards for its services, as well. In Fortune's annual survey of Fortune 500 Legal Departments, Paul Plevin was named as a "Go To" law firm. In addition, it is the only law firm with first-tier rankings across the board from U.S. News & World Report.

16 Perkins Coie**San Diego attorneys: 40**


PERKINS COIE
COUNSEL TO GREAT COMPANIES

Perkins Coie has more than 1,000 lawyers in 19 offices across the U.S. and Asia. The firm provides a full array of corporate, commercial litigation and intellectual property legal services to a broad range of clients in San Diego, from Fortune 500 corporations to startups, as well as public and nonprofit organizations. Last year, Sean Prosser, a member of the firm's securities litigation practice, was named a "Lawyer of the Year" by Best Lawyers.

17 Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman**San Diego attorneys: 24**

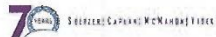

pillsbury

Pillsbury's San Diego offices provide clients with legal counsel in all matters relating to business law. Clients range from public corporations to entrepreneurs and startups, all vital to the San Diego economy. In 2017, Pillsbury partner Callie Bjurstrom represented Comic-Con in a 10-day trial regarding a trademark infringement claim.

18 Procopio Cory Hargreaves & Savitch**San Diego attorneys: 119**


Procopio

Procopio Cory is described as a Big Law firm without the Big Law feel. Its flexible fee structure allows attorneys in its San Diego office to represent regional clients who might otherwise be priced out of their services. The law firm works with corporate clients to develop winning strategies and solve complex legal problems affecting their business.

19 Seltzer Caplan McMahon Vitek**San Diego attorneys: 44**


70th
SELTZER CAPLAN MCMAHON VITEK

Seltzer Caplan has served the San Diego Community for 70 years. The firm offers a broad range of legal services and expertise, ranging from family law and estate planning to business law and litigation. Seltzer Caplan is one of a handful of San Diego-founded mid-size law firms, and it has thrived because of its reputation for client service and value.

20 Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton**San Diego attorneys: 53**


SheppardMullin

Last year, Sheppard Mullin contributed more than 587 hours to 35 legal matters through the San Diego Volunteer Lawyer Program, as well as providing financial support. Sheppard Mullin has offices in downtown San Diego as well as Del Mar. Its staff represents clients in a variety of matters involving nearly all of the region's industries, from health care to hospitality and from real estate to employment.

a lack of developable land isn't the only issue. There are also transportation issues, the shortage of commercial property for light industrial use and a plethora of environmental concerns.

"We are trying to solve some of these problems that we have here in San Diego, which are not unique," Kremer said. "We have to take a more thoughtful approach to zoning and land use and forecast what will be the best mix for San Diego's future needs."

Some lawyers are shedding their Big Law roles for more nimble operations. At just five years old, CGS3 attracts experienced, partner-level lawyers with deep market expertise. And already the firm's fingerprints are all over San Diego's high-profile developments, such as Liberty Station, Westfield UTC and the Sempra Energy headquarters.

Sean Southard, an attorney with CGS3, credits the firm's success to its ability to quickly complete deals and maintain amicable business relationships. The ability to lock in deals quickly is imperative to success in San Diego's red hot real estate market.

"We are able to compete with the big firms because we have a deep bench with a high level of expertise and we can scale quickly," Southard said. "Our firm is much more nimble in the way we can arrange fees, and we leverage market knowledge to close deals much faster than our competition."

"It is the difference between a battleship and a Coast Guard cutter."

But as much as lawyers want their clients to move quickly and succeed in business, legal disputes do arise. When a business deal goes south, the finger-pointing begins, and someone will be held responsible. That is where the lawyers at Noonan Lance Boyer & Banach step in.

Focused solely on litigation, it works with businesses, such as real estate developers, to handle business and commercial lawsuits. Ethan Boyer, a partner at the firm, started litigating 24 years ago after graduating from University of California, Berkeley, School of Law.

"Every case is its own little puzzle that you have to learn about the client, the problem, a

new industry. And so you become, for a brief time, a specialist in whatever type of business or issue you are dealing with,” Boyer said about representing local clients in civil lawsuits. “Getting it resolved in their favor is something that is always satisfying.”

Clients typically hire Noonan Lance when something has gone wrong.

“If they are doing things right, then they are avoiding litigation,” Boyer said.

But sometimes things happen that are out of the client’s control, he said.

Noonan Lance enjoys a close working relationship with its clients, in some cases for decades. In addition to a strong referral engine, clients repeatedly hire the Noonan Lance team when push comes to shove over a business dispute.

“We have a lot of great businesses here that are either old-school or cutting-edge



businesses,” Boyer said. “Representing local clients keeps you connected in the community. You root for the local businesses, and

you hope that you are their first choice when they need help.”