



## Joan L. Cassman

### Partner

Named one of the "Top 25 Municipal Lawyers of California" by the *Daily Journal* in December of 2011, Joan has practiced in the field of municipal law for nearly 40 years with Hanson Bridgett.

Joan is the General Counsel for the San Mateo County Transit District, the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (commonly known as "Caltrain"), and the San Mateo County Transportation Authority. These agencies provide public transportation services and infrastructure on the Bay Area Peninsula, including a \$1.7 billion project to electrify the Caltrain right of way from San Francisco to San Jose.

Since 1989, Joan has served as the City Attorney for the City of Millbrae. In addition, Joan is General Counsel for the Peninsula Traffic Congestion Relief Alliance, a transportation demand management joint powers authority of 17 cities and the County of San Mateo, and is the General Counsel for the Mid-Peninsula Water District. Joan has also served a number of cities and public agencies as special counsel, including San Carlos, Costa Mesa, Brentwood, San Luis Obispo, Berkeley, San Mateo County Mosquito Abatement District and the Woodridge School District. She is one of the Evaluators for the City of San Jose Elections Commission and in that role recommends disposition of complaints alleging ethical violations under the San Jose Municipal Code.

Joan understands the art of serving a client as General Counsel and she understands how local government agencies function. She is often called upon to provide guidance as special counsel when crises occur, such as employee embezzlements. Joan has expertise in a wide spectrum of issues including election law, environmental and real property matters, railroad operations, purchase of service and franchise agreements, public works projects, municipal finance, and government reorganization matters. She has represented both public and private entities in government proceedings involving all aspects of development, contracts, procurement, and bid protests.

Joan serves on the Board of Trustees of UC Hastings Law School. She was a founding member of the San Mateo Foster City Education Foundation and she has served on the Board of Trustees of Samaritan House which provides medical services, shelter, food and clothing assistance to those in need in San Mateo County, and serves on the Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Universalists of San Mateo.

#### Representative Work

#### San Francisco

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#### Practices/Industries

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Government

Municipal and Public Agency

Government Ethics

Water Law

Political & Election Law

Public Transit & Transportation

**City of Millbrae.** As the City Attorney since 1989, she oversees all legal work and managed the real property acquisition and eminent domain cases for the Millbrae Overpass Bridge, a multi-million dollar railroad grade separation project.

**Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board.** Oversees and manages the legal services for the Caltrain commuter train operations capital improvements including an \$800 million design build project to electrify the right of way, a \$600 million electric vehicle procurement and attendant real property acquisition to implement project.

**City of San Jose.** Serves as the Evaluator for the Elections Commission. Recommends findings for all complaints alleging ethical violations under the San Jose Municipal Code.

**Mid-Peninsula Water District.** Serves as General Counsel to the Mid-Peninsula Water District.

## Publications

"New Brown Act Reporting Requirements," co-author, *Public Agency Law Alert* (March 2014)

"Declaring a State of Emergency: What You Need to Know," co-author, *Western City* (May 2011)

## Presentations

"Legal Counsel's Role in Hiring a GM," APTA Legal Affairs Conference (February 2016)

"Local Government in a Brave New World: Law Enforcement, Code Enforcement, and Public Agency Liability," Municipal Law Institute Symposium (February 2015)

"Brown Act Compliance – Traps for the Unwary," Markkula Center for Applied Ethics at Santa Clara University (October 2014)

"We Had No Idea We Were Being Ripped Off! What Every Manager Needs To Know About Internal Controls and Fraud," co-speaker, MMANC Region 1 Event (June 2014)

"A New Look at Design Immunity: Expanding Protections for Public Entities," IMLA Conference (October 2013)

"Municipal Restructuring: Discussion & Dialogue with Key Players," Turnaround Management Association Northern California (June 2013)

"Selecting an Operator for Caltrain: The Procurement Experience and Lessons Learned," APTA Legal Affairs Conference (February 2012)

"Legal Authority of Cities to Outsource and Share Services," Hanson Bridgett Municipal Law Institute (February 2012)

"Outsourcing and Shared Services," Hanson Bridgett Public Policy Forum (January 2012)

"Navigating the Labor Laws in a Time of Scarcity: RIF, Furloughs and Other Cutbacks," Hanson Bridgett Seminar (April 2011)

"November Ballot Propositions," San Mateo County Council of Cities Meeting (August 2010)

"Contractual Risk Transfer" (August 2010)

"The Investigatory and Reporting Authority of Civil Grand Juries Acting in Their 'Watch Dog' Capacity" (June 2010)

"Controlling Public Employment Costs in Challenging Times," Hanson Bridgett Workshop on Public Employee Benefits (May 2010)

"Keeping it Legal: The What's, Why's and How's of a Utility Rate and Connection Fee Ordinance," Bay Area City Attorneys Association (March 2010)

"From Grease to Energy – The Legal Challenges with the Millbrae Co-Generation Facility," Bay Area City Attorneys Association (July 2008)

"The Governor's Commission and OPEB Strategies," OPEB Workshop (March 2008)

"Arranged Marriage: Water Supply and Land Use Planning," Contra Costa County City Attorneys Association (August 2007)

"The Creep of Casual Corruption" (March 2006)

"Joint Powers Authorities: Opportunities and Challenges," League of California Cities (September 2003)

### **Honors & Awards**

Top 25 Municipal Lawyers of California, Daily Journal (2011)

### **Professional Affiliations**

Bar Association of San Francisco

Bay Area City Attorneys Association, Past President

San Mateo County Bar Association, Government and Municipal Law Section

Senator Dianne Feinstein's Judicial Advisory Committee for Northern California

California Women Lawyers

Queen's Bench

### **Education**

J.D., University of California, Hastings College of the Law (1977)

B.A., Williams College and Wellesley College (1974)

Joan L. Cassman  
Partner



**Admissions and Courts**

California