HUSCH BLACKWELL

Nikelle Meade

PARTNER

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OVERVIEW

Nikelle represents clients in real estate development, handling both their government permitting and transactional needs.

Nikelle stands out among land development attorneys for her ability to help clients with real estate projects from start to finish: she's represented buyers, sellers, investors, lenders, and borrowers in all aspects of commercial real estate transactions, including purchases and sales, leases, construction, procurement, general contracts, and public financing and economic development incentives. She has vast experience with a wide variety of development projects, including public-private partnerships (P3).

Alongside her traditional transactional work, Nikelle also represents clients before local governments across Texas in obtaining a diverse array of land use related permits, including zoning approvals, licensing agreements, restrictive covenants, and site development permits. She routinely helps clients navigate relationships with city councils, zoning boards of adjustment, planning commissions, other local governing bodies, and state and local agencies, and she is adept at negotiating with elected officials who may be facing public opposition to new development. Nikelle has an outstanding track record achieving the results clients need

"Nikelle is well aware of the market, the players and the municipal side of transactions."

— Chambers USA 2024

Industry

Real Estate, Development, & Construction

Services

Banking & Finance
Corporate Real Estate
Data Centers
Economic Development Impact
Land Use
Public Law
Public-Private Partnerships (P3)
Real Estate Investment

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to proceed with development projects, often finding win-win solutions that provide additional opportunities for community investment.

After nearly thirty years in land use and real estate work, Nikelle has excellent relationships with decisionmakers across the state, and she knows exactly where to connect clients to get projects across the finish line. She and the Husch Blackwell team are unusual in their ability to serve as a one-stop shop for clients in this space, handling both the permitting process and the ultimate transactional, financing, and construction needs. While Nikelle is experienced with cities, counties, and municipalities throughout Texas, she also has a nationwide firm behind her, with colleagues in more than 20 offices and the firm's virtual office ready to step in and take on client projects in across the country.

Nikelle is known as a solutions-driven professional who's determined to turn client concepts into fully built, successful projects. Clients appreciate her dedication to understanding not only the project at hand but also how a new development fits into the clients' overall business goals and plans—as well as her willingness to meet aggressive timelines and ensure that complex projects stay on track.

Nikelle is a member of the firm's Executive Board.

Case Studies

Jacobs Engineering Group

Our team assisted the client, one of world's largest engineering companies, in relocating its corporate HQ to the Lone Star State.

Hunt Development Group

Our P3 team assisted the client in crafting a winning bid to develop a 430,000-square-foot civil and family courthouse facility to replace the Heman Marion Sweatt Courthouse.

Experience

- Represented a Fortune 500 company in negotiation of economic development incentives from state and local governments for the construction of a major industrial facility.
- Represented a commercial real estate developer for a high-rise condominium development in Austin's central business district and surrounding areas.
- Counseled a national real estate investment trust (REIT) in entitlement matters.

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Experience

- Represented a property owner association in the negotiation of entitlements with a national developer for a $100 million development project.
- Represented a multifamily housing developer for the creation of a public-private partnership to develop a 250-unit apartment development.
- Advised an international developer in 5,000-acre mixed-use development with public financing.
- Represented a Fortune 500 company in negotiation of a services contract with a local governmental body.
- Served as land development counsel and local real estate and financing counsel for real estate investment firm as it acquired three hotels and resorts in Texas (worth $93 million), each of which were active resorts situated in areas of the state with unique and complicated water, wastewater and environmental issues.
- Assisted a multi-family developer and construction company in putting approximately 1,700 units in place throughout Texas in one year worth more than $300 million.
- Represented a multi-family developer in securing entitlements and negotiating agreements in connection with a multi-family housing development being developed in connection with a retail center anchored by CVS valued at $70 million.
- Assisted Crusoe Energy Systems in reaching financial close in the second phase of a $15B joint venture with Blue Owl Capital and Primary Digital Infrastructure to fund the 1.2-gigawatt AI data center in Abilene, Texas.

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Recognition

- BL Rankings' *The Best Lawyers in America®*
  - Land Use and Zoning Law, 2020-2027
  - Litigation - Land Use and Zoning, 2018-2027
  - Real Estate Law, 2018-2027
  - *Best Lawyers®* Land Use and Zoning Law "Lawyer of the Year," Austin, 2021
- *Chambers USA*
  - Real Estate: Zoning/Land Use, 2022-2026
- *The Legal 500 United States*
  - Real estate: Land use/zoning, Recommended lawyer, 2024-2026
- *Austin Monthly* magazine, Top Austin Attorney, Land Use Environment, 2019, 2023-2026
- *Austin Business Journal*
  - Power Players, 2023
  - Top 20 People to Know, 2012
  - Profiles in Power Award, 2009
- *Lawyers of Color*, Wonderful Women, 2023
- National Black Lawyers (NBL), Top 100, 2023
- Travis County Women Lawyers' Association, Pathfinder Award, 2023
- *Bisnow*, Austin Women Leading Real Estate, 2022
- *REDNews,* Texas Icons, 2022
- Texas Bar Foundation Fellow, 2013-present
- *Texas Monthly*, Top Women Attorneys in Texas, 2020
- *Austin Black Business Journal*, Lawyer of the Year, 2019
- *Austin Black Business Journal*, Achievements in Black Austin, 2019

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- Thomson Reuters' *Texas Super Lawyers*, Rising Star, 2004-2006, Land Use/Zoning, Legislative & Governmental Affairs, 2016-2019
- The Business Journals' Influencers: Law, 2018
- Kappa Alpha Psi Outstanding Community Leader Award, 2013
- *Austin Under 40*, 2007

Education

- J.D., University of Texas School of Law
  - Endowed Presidential Scholar, 1992-1995
- B.A., University of Texas at Austin
  - English and Psychology
  - Texas Excellence Scholar, 1988-1992

Admissions

- Texas

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Community Leadership

- AARO (Austin Area Research Organization)
- Anti-Defamation League (ADL) Austin, Board of Directors
- Austin Chamber of Commerce, Board Member
- Austin Business Journal, Mentor
- Austin Habitat for Humanity, Board of Directors
- Austin Parks Foundation, Board of Directors
- Austin Steam Train Association, Board of Directors
- Austin Trail Foundation, Project Advisory Committee
- Ballet Austin, Board of Directors
- Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority, Vice Chair
- Downtown Austin Alliance, Board Member, Secretary, Executive Committee, Governance Committee Vice Chair
- H.A.A.M (Health Alliance for Austin Musicians), Chair Elect
- Real Estate Council of Austin, President's Council
- Texas Health Action, Board Member, Governance Chair
- Urban Land Institute – Austin, Advisory Board Member, Creative Culture Council

Texas Bar Foundation Fellow

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