



Robert A. Eckels

OF COUNSEL

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OVERVIEW

For Judge Eckels, achieving client goals is about careful preparation, anticipating challenges and marshalling the right resources at the right time to overcome obstacles.

Judge Eckels is recognized as a national leader in issues of transportation, public finance/public private partnerships (P3), crisis management, disaster preparation, response and recovery, homeland security, education and health care. He served six terms in the Texas state legislature before being elected County Judge of Harris County, and served on advisory committees to President George W. Bush and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

He brings deep problem-solving experience to large-scale projects. As County Judge of Harris County, he was nationally lauded for his leadership in response to Hurricane Katrina, during which he oversaw the conversion of the Astrodome and Reliant Park into the largest shelter operation in U.S. history, housing a quarter of a million people displaced by the storm. Judge Eckels was also indispensable to the creation of the Houston TranStar Transportation and Emergency Operations Center, which assists local governments and emergency responders to serve and protect residents during disasters and emergencies. Most recently, Eckels is a founder and director of Texas Central Railway, the company undertaking the development, design, construction, finance and operation of a new high-speed passenger train line between the Dallas Metroplex and Greater Houston.

Industry

Real Estate, Development, & Construction

Services

Campaign Finance, Political Ethics, & Election Law

Corporate

Government Solutions

Levee & Flood Protection

Opportunity Zones

Public Law

Public-Private Partnerships (P3)

Securities & Corporate Governance

Having served on the boards of both publicly traded and private companies, Judge Eckels is well-versed in corporate governance, stakeholder and shareholder issues and routinely assists clients with litigation and negotiation, as well as planning, risk management and compliance.

Experience

- Served as principal negotiating with team owners and leagues for construction of NRG Stadium, home of the Houston Texans; Minute Maid Park, home of the Houston Astros; and Toyota Center, home of the Houston Rockets.
- Served as Chair of Harris County Toll Road Authority and completed 500-mile regional toll road system, creating partnerships with neighboring counties and Texas Department of Transportation (TxDoT) to develop their toll roads in the region.
- Assisted foreign nationals in creating U.S.-based company to export U.S. environmental remediation technology and corresponding Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) compliance program.
- Assisted international partnership in preparation of bid documents for copper mine and FCPA compliance.
- Assisted U.S. real estate development company in negotiations for tax treatment by local governments.
- Advised U.S. petrochemical company on tax abatements.
- Assisted U.S.-based floating production storage and offloading shipbuilding project with foreign permit issues.
- Presented domestically and abroad on public-private partnerships.

Education

- J.D., South Texas College of Law Houston
- B.S., University of Houston

Admissions

- Texas
- District of Columbia
- New York
- Colorado
- U.S. Supreme Court

Community Leadership

- Texas County and District Retirement System, Chairman
- Gulf Coast Community Protection and Recovery District, President
- K9s4Cops Inc., Board of Directors
- Do the Write Thing Texas Inc., Chairman of the Board
- South Texas College of Law Houston, Board of Directors
- Rotary Club of Houston, Board of Directors
- Lombardi Foundation Inc., Board of Directors