

Daily Journal

APRIL 27, 2011

REAL ESTATE

TOP LAND USE LEADERS 2011



David A. Gold

Morrison & Foerster LLP
San Francisco

Notable Clients: Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc., First Solar Inc., Calera Corporation

8+ million square feet | Total Square Feet/Acres of Projects Worked on in 2010-11



Blythe Solar Power Project, Blythe

Gold became fascinated with politics at an early age, and the San Fernando Valley-native fondly remembers walking precincts for Tom Bradley's first two mayoral campaigns in 1968 and 1972.

As a reporter and editor for the Daily Cal at UC Berkeley, Gold covered the UC Regents and student politics. Gold said he always was fascinated with government and how politicians navigate interest groups and forge consensus.

"I've always followed contentious battles," Gold said. "It would seem that I'm drawn to them."

Gold said his interest in politics naturally lead to his practice in land use and zoning law. He wasn't sure where his career would take him when he enrolled Gould School of law at USC, but he knew it wouldn't be courtrooms.

"I was never interested in going to law school to be a litigator," Gold said.

Gold advises First Solar Inc. on land use, environmental law and regulatory compliance for its solar power plants. Last year he won approval for projects in the Antelope Valley and Boulder City, Nev.

The Antelope Valley project will create a massive 230 megawatt plant on 2,100 acres in Los Angeles County. It is expected to be complete in three to four years, and is projected to produce enough energy for 75,000 homes.

"For me it is just an incredibly satisfying practice to be transforming and applying a lot of the strategies and substantive knowledge of over 30 years of

practice to advancing the cause of having large scale photovoltaic projects in the California desert," Gold said.

He said the solar projects are challenging because they frequently face not-in-my-backyard opposition from local residents.

"Everybody professes to be proponents of solar energy, but when it comes down to specific sites, there is still a lot of stakeholder groups saying it should be elsewhere," Gold said.

Gold also has advised the Kaiser Foundation Health Plan since 1991 and was involved with the 'development of 15 of its major medical facilities in California.

— Brandon Ortiz