



Michael A. T. Pagni, Of Counsel

mpagni@mcdonaldcarano.com

O: 775.788.2000; D: 775.326.4361

Areas of Practice

Real Estate & Land Use

Business Entities & Transactions

Energy, Environment & Natural Resources Law

Bar Admission

Nevada

Education

- J.D., University of California College of the Law, San Francisco (formerly University of California, Hastings College of the Law), Tony Patino Fellow, 1997
- B.A., History and Business Administration, University of California, Los Angeles, 1993

Michael Pagni is Of Counsel in McDonald Carano's Reno office. He is Chair of the Energy, Environment & Natural Resources Law Practice Group.

Mike is a life-long resident of Reno and has worked at McDonald Carano for more than 20 years. After his second year of law school, Michael joined McDonald Carano as a Summer Law Clerk and then ultimately joined the firm as an Associate in 2001 and became Partner in 2002. In 2022, Michael joined The Di Loreto Companies as Executive Vice President and General Counsel. The Di Loreto Companies is a nationally recognized, award-winning home-building and real estate development company operating primarily in Nevada, Northern California, and Colorado. Michael rejoined McDonald Carano as Of Counsel in September 2025.

Prior to law school, Michael served as a Legislative Intern for Senator Harry Reid in Washington, D.C. and for Nevada State Senator William Raggio. During law school, he served as a Law Clerk for the Honorable Melvin Brunetti, United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, and the Honorable Howard D. McKibben, former Chief Judge of the United States District Court for the District of Nevada. Michael served as General Counsel to Governor Jim Gibbons in his 2006 gubernatorial campaign.

Michael's practice focuses on real estate, land use and zoning entitlements, water law, and commercial transactions. He also has extensive experience advising public agencies.

Mixed-Use Real Estate Development Project Expertise

Michael's experience includes representing major real estate developers and mixed-used development projects in connection with acquisitions, entitlements, securitization, financing, and sales. His practice includes zoning and land use entitlement planning for which he represents clients before local government planning commissions, city councils, and county commissions.

Michael's comprehensive experience includes master planned mixed-use residential and commercial development projects, each with many of the following components -- single-family, multi-family, mixed neighborhood detached and attached residential units; age-restricted living communities; schools; golf courses; recreation centers; regulated wetlands; and commercial centers. He has unique experience with large-scale infill development sites.

Michael represents master developers on all aspects of project development, including purchase and sale transactions for land; development agreements with vertical builders; creation of Master CC&Rs; operation and governance of drainage districts, homeowners associations, and landscape maintenance associations; securing Master Plan amendments, zoning amendments and approval of planned unit development handbooks; change applications before the Nevada State Engineer; representation before the Nevada Real Estate Division; special assessment district and tax increment assessment financing for infrastructure; land use entitlements before City and regional planning authorities; development declarations and agreements; roadway impact fee administration; drainage and flood impact fee administration; water rights development; utility infrastructure agreements for sewer, water and power; fire and park agreements; easements; rights of way; street dedications; master infrastructure agreements for construction of infrastructure; and wetlands designations with the Army Corps of Engineers, among others.

Michael's highly regarded real estate expertise is demonstrated by the high-profile local, state and national clients that select him as outside counsel. For example, his clients have included master developers of the five largest master-planned mixed-use residential and commercial developments in Reno; the master developer of one of the largest mixed-used developments in the City of Sparks; a consortium of public, private, and community partners providing and financing affordable housing and rental properties in rural Nevada; the largest homebuilder in the U.S.; the largest publicly traded gaming company in the U.S.; and a North Dakota-headquartered automobile dealership group with dealerships in Nevada, Idaho, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota and Washington.

Water Law Expertise

Michael's practice includes specialty expertise in water law issues as he represents real estate clients involved in water rights acquisitions, securitization, service commitments, adjudications, and change applications. Michael has advised on water resources issues, including matters related to the implementation of the Truckee River Operating Agreement, before state and federal courts and administrative agencies such as the Nevada State Engineer and the California Water Resources Board. Michael has served as outside General Counsel to several large water related public agencies in northern Nevada, including the largest municipal water purveyor in Northern Nevada (a not-for-profit community-owned water utility), several irrigation companies, and the Washoe County Water Conservation District.

Public Entity Expertise

Michael has extensive experience serving as outside and in-house General Counsel for large public entities in northern Nevada. For example, he has served as General Counsel for the Truckee Meadows Water Authority, Washoe County Water Conservation District, Western

Regional Water Commission, Reno Tahoe Airport Authority, and Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority.

Michael has provided legal counsel to public agencies on municipal laws relating to public contracting and procurement; public works projects and bid procedures; public property management; mergers, acquisitions and dispositions; Nevada Open Meeting Law compliance; Nevada public records act compliance; and government relations and advocacy. For these clients, Michael also attends board, committee, and public meetings; works with board members and staff on issues ranging from human resource matters to negotiating leases and contracts; renders opinions on bylaws and parliamentary procedures; handles court appearances; and assists public agency lobbyists on state legislative issues affecting the public entity client.

Corporate Law and Transactions Expertise

Michael is experienced in the formation, operation, financing, and disposition of businesses, private companies and other enterprises. He focuses primarily on real estate developers and industrial property owners, and has significant experience in the negotiation and documentation of commercial leases and related matters.

Awards and Recognition

- *Martindale-Hubbell* – AV Preeminent Peer Review Rating (since 2012)
- *The Best Lawyers in America* – “Lawyer of the Year” in Real Estate Law (2022)
- *The Best Lawyers in America* – Government Relations (2022)
- *The Best Lawyers in America* – Land Use & Zoning Law (2021-2022)
- *The Best Lawyers in America* – Real Estate Law (2017-2022)
- *The Best Lawyers in America* – Corporate Law (2013-2022)
- *Nevada Business Magazine* – “Top Rank Attorneys” (2017)
- *Mountain States Super Lawyers* magazine – “Rising Stars” (2011, 2009)
- *Nevada Business Magazine* – “Best Up and Coming Attorneys” (2008)

Publications

- [“Truckee River Operating Agreement: A Game Changer for Water Supply in the Truckee Meadows”](#), *Nevada Lawyer Magazine*, July 2016
- Feature Interview, [“In his own words: Michael Pagni, partner with MC”](#), *Nevada Business Magazine*, February 19, 2012
- “The Constitutionality of English-Only Provisions in the Public Employee Speech Arena: An Examination of *Yniguez v. Arizonans for Official English*”, *Hastings Constitutional Law Quarterly*, Fall 1996

Professional Affiliations

- Vice Chair, Board of Directors, REMSA Health
- Member, City of Reno Redevelopment Agency Advisory Board
- Member, Builders Association of Northern Nevada Legislative Committee

Michael A. T. Pagni

- Member, Washoe County Sheriff Honorary Deputies Association
- Founders Club and Board Member, Nevada Discovery Museum (2011-2014)
- Board Member, Hot August Nights Foundation (2015-2020)
- Chairman, State of Nevada Standing Committee on Judicial Ethics and Election Practices (2011-2014)

McDonald Carano LLP (www.mcdonaldcarano.com)

Reno Office: 100 West Liberty Street, Tenth Floor, Reno, NV 89501, P: 775.788.2000

Las Vegas Office: 2300 West Sahara Avenue, Suite 1200, Las Vegas, NV 89102, P: 702.873.4100