

## Cathy Altman

PARTNER

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**"Cathy's strategic thinking is exceptional; she'll get you where you need to be." ~2026 Chambers USA Guide**

Cathy Altman is a construction lawyer who offers clients the full range of services—from strategic counsel on transactional matters and project planning to resolving often complex disputes (including real estate disputes) through negotiation, arbitration, or litigation. She has represented both public and private entities in connection with the construction of large commercial or infrastructure projects, such as highways, bridges, airport and rail facilities, energy projects, manufacturing facilities, and commercial buildings.

Success in the construction and real estate areas requires the ability to think ahead, anticipate problems, and focus simultaneously on both the smallest tactical details and the bigger strategic picture—Cathy boldly checks all these boxes. A fifth-generation farmer, she also possesses a well-grounded work ethic and the creative vision to help build something extraordinary, often from nothing, for her clients.

In addition to her practice as an advocate or neutral arbitrator on construction matters, Cathy stays integrally connected to the business community and industry leaders through her service on boards that promote economic development in North Texas, as well as her leadership position with a national construction law organization. "I am also very fortunate to serve on a public board that annually oversees hundreds of millions of dollars in engineering and construction contracts for infrastructure projects. Sitting in that chair has empowered me with even greater awareness of the kind of legal advice and guidance that helps leaders positively impact their organization."

### OUTSIDE OF WORK

Cathy likes to joke that she collects farm animals for therapy. On her 20-acre farm (significantly smaller than the 10,000-acre farm where she grew up), she has chickens, guinea hens, horses, and some ridiculously adorable pygmy goats that she offers up for charity "goat yoga" events, and a pack of wonderful Pyrenees dogs that helps her watch over the herd. She is also a voracious reader of leadership and personal development books by authors such as John Maxwell and Seth Godin—which not only helps *her* to be a better leader, but also helps her understand our clients' leadership roles and challenges.

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### AREAS OF PRACTICE

- Real Estate, Construction, Infrastructure
  - Litigation, Disputes, Appeals
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## **BOARD CERTIFICATIONS**

- Board Certified, Construction Law, Texas Board of Legal Specialization
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## **REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS**

### Construction Experience

- Regularly advise owners and subcontractors regarding procurement, risk allocation, contract negotiations, and claims resolution for design and construction of public and private projects, including commercial, industrial, and infrastructure projects.
- Lead counsel on complex construction disputes described below involving defects, change orders and delays on road and highway projects, water treatment plants, airport and rail facilities, energy projects, multifamily, hospital, and other public projects.
- Represented public entity on a \$1.5 billion design build project involving delay claims relating to real estate matters.
- Represented public entity in connection with delay claims and change orders asserted by contractor on \$200,000,000 million project.
- Represented owner of \$100,000,000 manufacturing facility in connection with cost overrun, delays, and defects by terminated contractor.
- Represented regional tollway authority on various transactional and dispute matters, including substantial claim for cost overruns and delay by contractor in connection with construction of a tollway project.
- Represented international airport in two lawsuits involving delay and change order claims arising out of design and/or construction defects and costs to repair defective rail facilities.
- Represented subcontractor in connection with state and federal lawsuits arising out of transmission line project.
- Represented large metropolitan county in connection with delay and cost overrun claims by general contractor relating to a various matters, including a jail project, road project, and complex historical renovation of courthouse and other county facilities.
- Represented manufacturer and installer of baggage handling systems in construction and payment disputes around the country and served for three months in a secondment as solo in-house counsel, assisting with risk analysis of bids, drafting construction contracts, and advising on change orders and dispute resolution during projects.
- Represented major airline in various contract and construction disputes involving fuel farms at multiple airports, as well as in arbitration and lawsuits arising out of design and construction defects, breach of warranties, schedule delays and cost overruns encountered in an \$80 million airport project in New York.
- Represented the public owner of a \$50 million performing arts center in a lawsuit against the architect for errors and omissions and schedule delays.
- Represented an international specialty supplier/subcontractor in numerous projects including water treatment facilities, hospitals, airports, and other government buildings.

- Represented the owner of a department store damaged by soil movement in a complex case involving claims against the design and construction team.
- Represented a large international client defending over \$80 million in claims brought by a foreign governmental entity arising from a gas turbine failure. The case involved protracted jurisdictional challenges and international discovery in three countries over several years.
- Represented a general contractor in a lawsuit filed by a condominium developer alleging schedule delays and warranty claims relating to water infiltration and other alleged construction defects.
- Represented a restaurant equipment supplier in various matters, including a dispute regarding cost overruns and delays in connection with a large commercial kitchen facility.

#### Business Litigation Experience

- Lead appellate lawyer on a successful reversal of class certification in an oil & gas matter.
- Representative clients include large insurance brokerage firms, reinsurers, equipment and device manufacturers, and others.
- Represented a regional hospital system in a complex antitrust lawsuit brought against a group of specialty physicians and its affiliated entities.
- Represented an investment company in \$50 million dispute arising out of the financing and acquisition of three high-rise office towers in New Orleans. The dispute involved litigation in two states and included numerous parties and counterclaims relating to the financing and performance of dozens of other commercial investments.
- Represented an investor in litigation regarding enforceability of excess tax payment agreements involving numerous high-rise office towers in Las Colinas.
- Represented a national insurance company in a multi-week arbitration against a hospital involving failure to transfer an HMO license and reimbursement of insurance proceeds. Represented a Delaware limited liability company in a multi-week AAA arbitration arising out of a dispute with a former partner and claims for dissolution.
- Represented a lender in federal court and AAA arbitration proceedings involving breach of contract and tortious interference claims arising out of a tri-party agreement for interim and permanent financing for commercial project.
- Represented the former officers and directors of a dot.com in defense of claims for breach of fiduciary duty brought in an adversary proceeding by a Chapter 7 trustee.
- Experience counseling and litigating on behalf of clients seeking to enforce or to defend against enforcement of covenants not to compete and nondisclosure agreements.
- Represented owner of hotel properties in suits for accounting and breach of fiduciary duty.
- Represented manufacturer in contract and product liability dispute involving specialized medical equipment.
- Represented various clients defending and enforcing covenants not to compete and trade secret disputes.

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#### CLIENT TESTIMONIALS

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#### EDUCATION & ADMISSIONS

## Education

- University of Kentucky, J.D., *cum laude*, 1995; Phi Delta Phi; Associate Editor, Kentucky Law Review, 1994-95
- Vanderbilt University, B.A., 1992

## Bar + Court Admissions

- Licensed in Texas
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District, Texas
- U.S. District Court, Northern District, Texas
- U.S. District Court, Southern District, Texas
- U.S. District Court, Western District, Texas

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## HONORS & AWARDS

- *Chambers USA*, Construction - Texas, 2023-2026
- Lawyer of the Year for Dallas/Fort Worth, Construction Law, *The Best Lawyers in America*® (BL Rankings), 2026
- *The Best Lawyers in America*® (BL Rankings), Litigation – Construction; Construction Law, 2013-2026
- Leading Lawyers in America, *Lawdragon 500*, 2025-2026
- Leading Dealmakers in America, Construction, *Lawdragon 500*, 2025-2026
- Leading Litigators in America, Construction Litigation, *Lawdragon 500*, 2024-2026
- Top 100 Lawyers in Texas, *Super Lawyers* by Thomson Reuters, 2024
- Top 100 Lawyers in Dallas/Fort Worth, *Super Lawyers* by Thomson Reuters, 2023-2024
- Top 50 Women Lawyers in Texas, *Super Lawyers* by Thomson Reuters, 2024
- Texas Super Lawyers, *Super Lawyers* by Thomson Reuters, 2014-2026
- Texas Rising Stars, *Super Lawyers* by Thomson Reuters, 2005-2010
- Best Lawyers in Dallas, *D Magazine*, 2015, 2019, 2021-2022, 2024-2026
- Dallas Top Women in Legal, National Diversity Council Award, 2019
- National Panel of Construction Arbitrators, American Arbitration Association

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## PROFESSIONAL & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- National Panel, American Arbitration Association
- Board of Directors, Trinity River Authority
- Regional Advisory Board, First Financial Bank
- Member, Construction Law Exam Commission, Texas Board of Legal Specialization
- Governing Committee Member and Membership Chair, ABA Forum on the Construction Industry
- Former Chair and Faculty Member, ABA Forum on Construction Trial Academy
- Past Chair, Owners and Lenders Division, ABA Forum on the Construction Industry

- Founding Member and Secretary, Ellis County Women in Business
- Member, Board Executive Committee and Chair, Governance Committee, North Texas Commission
- Board Member, Waxahachie Symphony Association; Co-Chair, Beaus & Belles
- Former Chair, Midlothian Chamber of Commerce
- Former Chair, Midlothian ISD Growth Management Committee
- Former Member, Ellis County Bond Oversight Committee (design/construction of new courthouse and jail)
- Former Board Member, Dallas Women Lawyers Association
- Former Board Member, Midlothian Economic Development Committee
- Former Secretary, Midlothian Independent School District 2011 Bond Oversight Committee
- Former Board Member, Meals on Wheels of Johnson & Ellis County
- Former Associate, Patrick E. Higginbotham American Inn of Court, 2001-2002

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## **PUBLICATIONS & PRESENTATIONS**

- Speaker, Show Me the Lines! Navigating Utility Relocation Challenges in Infrastructure Projects, Construction Super Conference, 2025
- Speaker, A Project Life Cycle Through the Owner Lens, 38th Annual Construction Law Conference, March 2025
- Speaker, Learning from War Stories: Lessons from Those in the Trenches, Dallas Region of the Society of Construction Law – North America (SCL-NA), April 27, 2023
- Author, "Considerations For Addressing Price Escalation And Supply Concerns For Construction Projects In A Post-Covid World", *Carrington Coleman Capital Newsletter*, 2023 Industrial & Other Real Estate Issue, February 2023
- Co-Editor, "Construction Trial Desk Book," ABA Forum on Construction Law, September 2021
- Co-Author, Chapter on "Miscellaneous Provisions," ABA's *The 2017 A201 Deskbook*
- Co-Author, Chapter on "Achievable Energy Performance," ABA's *Green Building and the Construction Lawyer*
- Speaker, Termination for Convenience, Construction Super Conference, 2019
- Speaker, A Speedy Defense, Texas State Bar Construction Annual Meeting, March 2019
- Speaker and Author, Steps to Avoid Disaster, ABA Forum on Construction on Construction Law, Fall Meeting, 2016
- Speaker, Front End Risk Management for Construction Projects, Insurance in the Construction Industry, January 2012
- Moderator, Construction Litigation: Identifying the Players and Pressure Points with an Eye Toward the End Game, University of Texas Construction Conference, Fall 2011
- Co-Program Chair and Article Author, "More than Nuts and Bolts: How to Construct and Deconstruct Expert Testimony," ABA Section of Litigation, Construction Litigation and Expert Witness Committees and Section of Public Contract Law
- Speaker, Lending Goes Green – What Non-Energy-Sector Borrowers Can Expect in the Future, SMU Corporate Counsel Symposium
- Speaker, Green Building Litigation, University of Texas Construction Conference, Fall 2010

- Speaker and Author, The Legislative Impact of Alternative Energy, Climate Change, and Sustainability in the Construction Industry, ABA Forum on the Construction Industry, Annual Conference, 2008