

Richard Reizen

Partner



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Services / Industries

Construction

Litigation

Real Estate

Clean Tech & Alternative Energy

Cannabis & Regulated Industries

Bio

With a reputation built on more than 40 years in construction and commercial litigation, Rich Reizen is known for his strategic thinking, industry fluency, and ability to turn legal complexity into practical solutions.

Rich is a trusted advisor and advocate for clients involved in major construction projects and complex commercial litigation across the country. As chair of Gould & Ratner's Construction Practice, he has represented contractors, subcontractors, architects, engineers, and owners on hundreds of projects ranging from high-rise office centers and multifamily developments to cutting-edge data centers and alternative energy sites.

His portfolio of work spans a remarkable range of project types, including:

- the world's largest cable-stayed pre-cast segment concrete span bridge
- convention centers, hotels, and government infrastructure
- water treatment plants, coal gasification sites, and nuclear power facilities
- high-rises, schools, arenas, performing arts centers, hospitals, and parking structures
- residential communities and commercial office buildings

Rich brings a rare dual perspective to his practice, having spent decades litigating construction agreements before focusing on transactional work. He has tried numerous jury and bench trials and arbitrations, giving him a practical understanding of how construction terms are interpreted in real-world disputes. This background allows him to draft and negotiate operative agreements with a level of insight that goes beyond textbook theory.

His litigation experience extends beyond construction as well. Rich has represented large institutions, closely held businesses, and entrepreneurs in a wide array of commercial litigation matters, including:

- financial, securities, and telecommunications disputes

- equipment lease litigation
- professional malpractice claims involving accounting, auditing, and legal services
- contract and partnership disputes
- complex multidistrict class actions, where he has served as lead counsel

In a notable in-house role, Rich served as interim general counsel for Chicago's largest general contractor at the time, advising the company during a six-month transition. That hands-on experience deepened his understanding of the operational and business realities contractors face—knowledge that now enhances his counsel to owners and developers navigating those relationships.

Clients describe Rich as highly engaged, strategic, and deeply invested in their success. "Rich is an outstanding attorney," one client noted. "He knows the construction industry and the players in it. Not only does he understand all the legal aspects, he also understands the business aspects. That is what is most important to us." Another client praised his ability to "navigate very complex and challenging construction environments," emphasizing his role from early contractor interviews to successful post-construction resolution.

A Fellow of the Construction Lawyers Society of America, Rich is recognized nationally for his excellence in the field. As the organization noted, "Rich Reizen's excellent reputation in the construction law arena throughout the country is a positive result of top-quality service."

He is also a frequent author and speaker on construction law, class actions, and commercial litigation issues—including accounting, financial, and banking matters.

Credentials

Education

Clark University
Loyola University Chicago School of Law

Bar Admissions

Illinois

Publications

- [Limitations of Liability Provisions in Construction Contracts: A Means to Manage Risk and Limit Financial Exposure](#) , May 7, 2026

Speaking Engagements

- [Rich Reizen Moderated a Panel at a Bisnow Chicago State of the Market Event, November 16, 2022](#)
- [Rich Reizen and Pat Johnson Presented at the 2022 Midwest Construction Law Symposium, August 12, 2022](#)
- [Rich Reizen Moderated a Panel at a Bisnow Chicago Construction & Development Event, July 21, 2022](#)
- [Rich Reizen Moderated a Panel at Bisnow Construction & Development Event, November 4, 2021](#)
- [Rich Reizen and Hannah Batsche Spoke at the 2021 NASBP West Meeting, October 29, 2021](#)
- [Rich Reizen and Hannah Batsche Spoke at the 2021 NASBP East Meeting, September 17, 2021](#)
- [WEBINAR: Chicago Deep Dish: Story Behind the Old Post Office, June 25, 2020](#)
- [Change has Come to Job Sites, and More Change is Yet to Come, June 3, 2020](#)
- [Rich Reizen and Ellen Chapelle Lead a Panel of Industry Experts at the Construction SuperConference, December 12, 2018](#)
- [WEBINAR: Delays in Digging: Best Practices in Handling Unexpected Finds on the Job Site, August 15, 2017](#)

Events

- [Rich Reizen, Pat Johnson and Hannah Batsche Represented Gould & Ratner at the ABA Forum on Construction, April 14, 2023](#)

Testimonials

"Rich and his team provided immense value from the initial contract discussion through the conclusion of our project. His vast experience proved invaluable as he helped us navigate a very complex and challenging construction environment. He would often be the voice of reason when emotions got high. Rich understood the magnitude of our project and what was at stake. He was always engaged, took ownership and took great pride in making sure that our project was a success. In fact, he continues to check in to see how the business is performing.....even two years after our move in." *President and CEO of a large manufacturing company*

Presentations

- Don't Lien on Me: A Practical Guide to Mechanics Liens, Gould & Ratner Seminar, July 2010
- Construction Litigation: How to Avoid It or at Least Increase Your Chance of Prevailing in It. Presentation to Lincoln Park Builders Club and other groups
- Numerous presentations to participants throughout the construction industry on construction issues

Key Cases or Transactions

- Acted as project construction counsel for \$1 billion rehabilitation of the Old Chicago Post Office encompassing over 2 million sq. ft. of usable space. The project was the largest mixed-use development project in the country at the time. The building, a historic landmark, sat vacant for many decades and is built over a public expressway and railway tracks. Gould & Ratner assisted the owner in dealing with numerous public, private and municipal entities, put in place the requisite insurance coverages necessary for the project to proceed and negotiated and drafted numerous contracts with contractors, consultants, design professionals and others for the remediation and development of the building, including tenant buildout, CEN and service contracts for the client.
- Represented the City of Chicago Department of Aviation in connection with the bid process and retention of the general construction team for construction of the \$841-million O'Hare Airport Rental Car/Parking Facility and resulting claims. The lowest bidder could not reach an agreed GMP budget with the city's Department of Aviation for the work, and the project was subsequently awarded to the second-lowest bidder. We advised the Department of Aviation as to whether the project had to be re-bid, as well as the process of awarding the bid, including the necessary contract provisions resulting from federal participation in funding the project and possible defenses to claims raised by the unsuccessful bidder. We were able to assist the city in negotiating an agreement that allowed the project to move forward without significant delay and resolved all claims by the unsuccessful bidder.
- Assisted owner of an 83-story building in drafting and negotiating numerous construction agreements for a \$6.5 million lobby renovation project and successfully represented the client against certain defect claims by a prospective tenant during the buildout process. Gould & Ratner also represented the owner in negotiating and drafting numerous services contracts.
- Handled pre-construction and construction phase negotiations on behalf of owner for a \$180 million renovation and repositioning project in South Loop. The development of significant pre-construction phase documentation helped keep the project on schedule while ownership was lining up the project team.
- Advised owner of a historical building throughout tenant buildout project. During the course of the project, change orders were submitted by contractor for work which were within the original scope. Gould & Ratner provided ongoing project management assistance to ownership in order to efficiently resolve these claims and keep the project on an extremely tight schedule for the incoming tenant in order to avoid liquidated damages for late delivery of space.

- Acted as project counsel for the nation's leading manufacturer of heavy transit buses in the design and construction of a \$100 million office, warehouse and manufacturing facility. Gould & Ratner also represented the company in the design and installation of a solar project, electrical vehicle charging stations and eBus charging stations. The work included drafting numerous contracts and the successful mediation of delay, defect claims and warranty issues.
- Prepared construction documentation for a truck trailer company's factory expansion located in South Dakota. In addition, Gould & Ratner handled all contract negotiations and claim management for construction of a new office building in North Dakota.
- Negotiated construction management contracts for a packing company's warehouse, manufacturing and office renovation in Canada. In addition, Gould & Ratner assisted the client with the development of a construction and installation agreement pertaining to a large scale laminator project. Due to unique project requirements, the agreement addressed off site construction and assembly along with subsequent reassembly and testing at the client facility.
- Represented a senior housing client on a multi-million dollar mediation against project team for claims of defective construction and inadequate specifications and drawings. In addition, Gould & Ratner developed various contract templates for client specific construction projects.
- Represented an owner in the design and construction of cryptocurrency and data mining facilities.
- Represents and serves as project counsel for a wide range of restaurants, coffee shops, grocery store chains and department stores in construction related matters.
- Represents the largest owner of radio stations in the country in a series of projects ranging from ground up office buildings, to rehabs of existing studio and office spaces throughout the country.
- Represented the owner of a multi-unit rental development regarding claims in excess of \$1 million for defective construction and water infiltration issues.
- Represented the contractor who was retained in connection with the renovation of the HVAC/temperature control system and its conversion to digital controls at a federal building. Prepared a claim for the contractor for unfinished work, unabsorbed overhead, change orders and delay against GSA. After extensive discovery concerning those issues, the claim was settled on favorable terms for our client before the U.S. Board of Contract Appeals.
- Represented a large real estate developer in an action against an auditing firm for failing to detect a multimillion-dollar embezzlement by the developer's bookkeeper. Despite the fact that no audit or attestation level services were performed, obtained a seven-figure recovery at trial based upon the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants' Management Advisory Standards (which had seldom been used to impute liability in litigation matters prior to that time).
- Represented general contractor in connection with the construction contracts for a \$90-million project for the construction of the high-level approaches and center span for a bridge crossing south of St. Petersburg, Fla. The bridge is the world's largest cable-stayed pre-cast segment concrete-span bridge and the second-largest concrete-span bridge in the world. All claims, including claims for change orders and extra work, were settled before completion of the work.
- Represented an electrical subcontractor in the negotiation of a multimillion-dollar subcontract for the electrical work on the construction of the McCormick Place Hotel in Chicago. The project involved negotiation of the specific subcontract, as well as a review of the contract between the design builder and the owner of the project.
- Represented the general contractor in a \$36-million project constructed for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. A multimillion-dollar claim was driven by incomplete plans, wrongful interpretation of the clean-down specifications, faulty owner-furnished design criteria for an equipment support system and a claim for acceleration. The claim was settled prior to a hearing before the U.S. Board of Contract Appeals.
- Represented a large real estate developer who entered into a store lease with one of the largest clothing designers in the world for that designer to develop a Chicago flagship store. After incurring substantial construction and other expenses to ready the premises, the client was notified by the designer that it would no longer rent the space. A declaratory action was initiated in federal court and a substantial verdict was rendered in favor of our client. That verdict on appeal to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit was preserved and the matter settled for a multimillion-dollar amount.
- Represented a municipality in a suit against its former auditing firm for failing to detect a multimillion-dollar fraud regarding the management of its self-insurance program. Obtained a favorable settlement for the municipality.
- Successfully argued before the Illinois Supreme Court the issue of how to treat Illinois Consumer Fraud Act claims, when such claims are asserted as part of a class action complaint involving a nationwide class.

News

Rich Reizen Joins the AAA's Construction Industry Panel as an Arbitrator, September 23, 2026

Sixteen Gould & Ratner Attorneys Named to Legal 500 City Elite List for Chicago, July 16, 2026

Gould & Ratner Construction Practice Publishes Article in Construction Executive, May 7, 2026

Gould & Ratner Works on Chicago's LaSalle Street Corridor Revitalization Initiative, March 31, 2025

Rich Reizen Quoted in Corporate Knights Article discussing 'Acts of God' and Climate Change, January 14, 2025

JD Supra Recognizes Rich Reizen Among "Top Ten Construction Authors" for 2022, March 6, 2023

JD Supra Recognizes Gould & Ratner Lawyers Among "Top Ten Construction Authors" for 2021, March 7, 2022

Rich Reizen Inducted Into the Construction Lawyers Society of America, December 7, 2020

The Dotted Line: When Should Contractors Use COVID-19 Liability Waivers?, August 25, 2020

Blood, Sweat And Plumbing: Remaking The Old Chicago Post Office, August 18, 2020

Businesses Break Contracts and Blame Virus. Is Climate Next?, August 5, 2020

The Dotted Line: How Will Clients Approach Contracts Post-Pandemic?, May 26, 2020

Gould & Ratner Supports the Illinois Prison Project, May 7, 2020

Bid Process Questioned For New Orleans Bourbon Street Repair, August 9, 2017

How to Handle Unexpected Archaeological Finds on the Job Site, February 8, 2017

The Dotted Line: How to Negotiate the Construction Bidding Process and Avoid a "Real Nightmare", September 12, 2016

Publications

When Labor Is in Short Supply: Strategies for Construction Owners and Developers, September 16, 2026

2026 Construction Forecast: The Only Thing Certain is Uncertainty, January 13, 2026

Impact of Rule Requiring Re-evaluation of DBEs Is Uncertain, December 1, 2025

Construction Pricing Models: Choosing an Appropriate Pricing Arrangement, August 28, 2025

Insuring Construction Risks through Commercial General Liability Policies, August 27, 2025

Talk It Out: The Importance of Effective and Consistent Communication in Construction Projects, July 15, 2025

Riding the Tariff Roller Coaster: Considerations for Construction, April 29, 2025

Climate Change and Construction: Top Five Considerations for Owners Before Building, January 22, 2025

Key Takeaways From Construction Roundtable on "Digging Into Pre-Construction: What Owners and Developers Need to Know When Starting Projects", July 8, 2024

Biden Administration Sets Roadmap for Building Decarbonization, April 12, 2024

2024 Construction Outlook, January 8, 2024

Constructing a Data Center: 2023 Update, July 24, 2023

Bringing Manufacturing Back: Tips for Planning a Successful Factory Construction, March 6, 2023

Forecast for Insuring Commercial Solar Panel Installations: Partly Cloudy, September 15, 2022

10 Tips to Improve Construction Site Project Communications, August 22, 2022

6 Questions Every Owner Should Ask When Planning High-End Residential Construction, June 8, 2022

Not So Fast: What to Consider Before Terminating Your General Contractor, March 28, 2022

ESG Considerations For Construction: Sustainable Design and Use of Sustainable Materials, February 21, 2022

The Case for an Owner's Representative, December 9, 2021

Owners and Developers Beware: FEMA Flood Insurance Program Is Changing Along With the Climate, August 24, 2021

Constructing a Data Center: Understanding the Key Issues, May 26, 2021

Best Practices for Addressing Rising Construction Material Costs, April 26, 2021

Let the Sun Shine: Best Practices For Solar EPC Contracts, March 23, 2021

Green Building, Biophilic Design, Passive House Technology and the Environmental Impact, March 12, 2021

COVID-19, A New President and Economic Uncertainty: What to Expect in the Construction Industry in 2021, February 1, 2021

Construction Issues and Opportunities During the COVID-19 Pandemic and Beyond, December 14, 2020

The Second Wave: Anticipating and Preparing For New Covid-19 Construction Shutdowns, December 9, 2020

Best Practices for Coping With Project Modifications, Suspension and Termination During the Age of COVID-19, July 13, 2020

Insurance Issues Facing the Construction Industry During the COVID-19 Pandemic and Beyond, June 10, 2020

Construction Projects Impacted by COVID-19?, May 21, 2020

Construction Issues and Opportunities During the COVID-19 Pandemic and Beyond, May 13, 2020

Executive Orders' Impact on Construction Activities During COVID-19 Crisis, April 29, 2020

Identifying and Managing Construction Risks During the Coronavirus Pandemic, April 20, 2020

Best Practices for Construction Site Safety During the COVID-19 Pandemic, March 25, 2020

City of Chicago Confirms Construction as Essential Infrastructure, Exempt From Stay Home Order, March 22, 2020

Illinois Gov. Pritzker's "Stay Home" Order: The Impact on Construction, March 21, 2020

Preparing for a Construction Project Shutdown During the Coronavirus Pandemic, March 20, 2020

IN-DEPTH UPDATE: The Impact of COVID-19 on Construction – Best Practices for Coping, March 16, 2020

The Impact of Coronavirus on Construction: How To Prepare, March 5, 2020

Change in Illinois Prompt Payment Law Limits Owners' Retainage Amounts, August 27, 2019

Seeing a Project From the Owner's Side, February 28, 2019

Issues Facing the Construction Industry in 2019, December 18, 2018

Underground surprises: When You Find Human Remains or Culturally Significant Artifacts on Your Construction Site, Stop, Call and Preserve, February 22, 2017

Identifying "Acts of God" in the Age of Climate Change and Political Upheaval, March 29, 2016

Illinois Department of Revenue Releases Guidance on Exemption Certificates, May 29, 2013