

## Efficient Construction Permitting

“Dawson & Associates had the same sense of urgency we had and pursued the case with diligence. We absolutely could not have done this alone — with Dawson, we had a partner.”

– Michael E. Diepenbrock  
Partner  
Panattoni Development Company

Arial view of Sacramento farmland photo © iStockphoto.com/aceebro

### CLIENT

Panattoni Development Company, which develops and manages industrial, office and retail projects in more than 100 U.S. markets.

### BACKGROUND

Panattoni Development Company (PDC), with co-developer DR Horton, had purchased 76 acres in suburban Sacramento with plans to develop commercial and residential properties. The site included about 5 acres of wetlands that had been degraded by past agricultural and flood control activities. With escrow closed and \$1 million in U.S. Fish & Wildlife mitigation secured, Panattoni was ready to schedule construction. However, the company received an alternative Federal proposal requiring that 40% of its property be reserved for wetlands. That alternative would require rezoning, reengineering, consultation, new plan approvals and a new analysis under the California Environmental Quality Act. The potential impact — \$14 million and an additional 18 months to 3 years to complete — could have been economically catastrophic for the company.

### RESPONSE

Panattoni engaged Dawson & Associates to secure an expedited development permit on a compressed timetable. The Dawson team went to work immediately, analyzing Panattoni's situation and researching similar permitting cases and successful resolutions. On a short timetable, the Dawson team and Panattoni prepared and submitted an analysis to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers describing Panattoni's responsiveness and financial commitment to the requirements of the original permit. Dawson also initiated discussions with Corps Headquarters, the Pentagon and Congressional leaders, establishing the merits of Panattoni's case.

Working together, Dawson and Panattoni promoted a rationale for the original agreement based on technical arguments and economic analysis. Dawson and Panattoni helped create enhanced understanding among Federal and state officials. This helped convince the Corps of Engineers District Commander to reconsider the alternative proposal.

Six months after release of the alternative proposal, the Corps of Engineers issued a final permit allowing development to move forward without on-site alternatives. Panattoni saved \$10 million in preservation costs.