

LAND USE AND ENVIRONMENTAL

Our land use attorneys have extensive experience assisting developers and property owners throughout Southern California.

Areas of expertise include state and local planning and zoning laws, the Subdivision Map Act, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), LEED certification and green building compliance, general plans, historical designations, development agreements, exactions and dedications, and compliance with local regulatory agencies including housing, building and safety, fire and health departments. We provide pre-development feasibility analysis, real estate project entitlements and zoning services, environmental law and due diligence, and community outreach.

As part of our extensive land use practice, we conduct thorough due diligence research (including title research, building permits and all zoning and planning history), land use application preparation, and management of the entitlement, public hearing, and development permitting process for an array of zoning and land use entitlements. Professional services include working with community groups and stakeholders, relations, entitlement applications including complex zone variances, zone changes, general plan amendments, conditional use permits, project appeals and responses to permit enforcement actions. We can also oversee project team selection and coordination and project timelines and fee estimates.

Services We Provide

Land Use Analysis/Pre-Development Analysis

Research and analyze current zoning restrictions, land use designations, previous zoning approvals, building permits, covenants, affidavits, environmental issues and potential liabilities. Evaluate proposed project description and preliminary site plan, arrange meetings with key government staff members and prepare project timelines, fee estimates, and entitlement strategy.

Entitlement Services, Project Management

Prepare applications for TOC/DENSITY Bonus, Housing/Planning, Site Plan Review, Adjustments, Modifications, Zone Variances, Conditional Use Permits, Plan Approvals, Zone Changes, Specific Plan Exceptions, Plan Amendments,

PROFESSIONALS

Allan B. Cooper
Geoffrey M. Gold
Jeffrey Harlan
Kimberly D. Lewis
Jonathan H. Riker
Lee Silver
Ellia M. Thompson
Pantea Yashar

and similar requests. We provide leadership through the entire entitlement process, from working with agency staff to determine all issues, outreach to community groups and stakeholders to obtain input, as well as representation at public hearings.

California Environmental Quality Act

Assist developers in all aspects of navigating CEQA, including initial negotiations with lead agency, oversight and coordination with preparers of environmental studies, i.e. Mitigated Negative Declarations and/or Environmental Impact Reports, developing responses to public comments and representation at all public hearings. We have prepared CEQA Guidelines and conducted CEQA and NEPA trainings for local public agencies.

Land Use Litigation

We are experienced land use litigators working on the side of developers for the right to entitle and develop their properties. We have handled a wide variety of writ of mandamus cases involving multiple cities and counties in Southern California. We have also handled numerous compliance cases against the Los Angeles Housing Department and the Los Angeles County Health Department.

Other Services

- Other professional legal services also include:
- Monitoring of Community Plan and General Plan Updates
- Conditional Use Permits for alcohol sales and service in retail stores, restaurants, bars and nightclubs
- Responses to enforcement actions (Building and Safety, Health Department, Housing Department)
- Represent property owners and landlords in criminal defense proceedings & REAP Actions
- Administrative Law hearings and appeals
- Project Appeals & Mitigation Monitoring

REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

Obtained approvals from City of Riverside for the development of a 35,000 square foot office/commercial two-building project.

Received entitlements to build several student housing/apartment buildings near the University of Southern California.

Negotiated signed, approved Development Agreement and multiple addendums with City of Inglewood for super graphic ads on freeway adjacent buildings.

Received approval from the City of Los Angeles to allow the continued use of a large commercial corner with a liquor store after the property owner faced several criminal nuisance and code violations

Secured approval for several “second dwelling units” throughout the City of Los Angeles.

Obtained land use entitlement approval to expand operations of a private, religious high school in Los Angeles, despite opposition from neighbors.

Obtained approval for a 26-unit small lot subdivision in Van Nuys, despite opposition from neighbors.

Achieved approval of lot line adjustments for clients’ properties located in the cities of Los Angeles, Torrance and Montebello.

Obtained entitlement approval for condominium conversion of 8-unit building in Hollywood.

Received approval from Mulholland Design Review Board for new construction of several very large single-family homes – one within the “inner corridor” and located right on Mulholland Drive and one within the “outer corridor” off of Mulholland.

Negotiated deal with the City of Alhambra to rebuild an existing non-conforming structure after a significant portion of the original structure was destroyed by fire.

Performed hundreds of due diligence research and analysis projects for property owners and prospective buyers of sites located throughout Southern California – from single-family homes to multiple parcel sites with 40+acres at all stages of the entitlement process.

CLIENT ALERTS

Land Use Partner Ellia Thompson Quoted in The *Commercial Observer* on Corruption at City Hall
Commercial Observer, 09.03.2020

Client Alert: City of LA Passes Wide-Sweeping Tenant Protections
Protections Go Further Than Those Proposed by Mayor and Governor
03.30.2020

Client Alert Update: More Details on Changes to TOC Maps
12.10.2018

Client Alert: Changes to TOC Tier Determinations Are Coming in December – Be Careful Before Buying New Properties and Get Your Applications In Now!
12.03.2018

Land Use Update: Los Angeles Approves Density Increases for Transit Oriented Communities
09.26.2017

City Planning Grants Reprieve of New Park Fees to Certain Projects
12.22.2016

On The Move: Daily Journal Announces New Land Use Team
05.23.2016

Alert - City Increases Park/Quimby Fees for ALL Future Residential Buildings
05.21.2016

Ervin Cohen & Jessup Acquires Land Use Group
05.18.2016

SUCCESSSES

Ervin Cohen & Jessup's Ellia Thompson Selected as Leader in Law Award Nominee

Ervin Cohen & Jessup Partners Joan Velazquez and Ellia Thompson Among Inspirational Women Award Finalists

Ervin Cohen & Jessup Works with City of L.A. to Protect TOC Incentives in Legal Win

Ervin Cohen & Jessup's Ellia Thompson Selected as One of Los Angeles' Most Influential Women Attorneys

Ervin Cohen & Jessup Secures Unanimous Decision Defining Permit Term Limits