

People



Ellen M. Castillo

Consultant, Real Estate\*  
Land Use and Development

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Ellen Castillo is a Senior Urban Planning Consultant in Akerman’s Real Estate Practice Group in Los Angeles. Her practice focuses on providing strategic real property development advice, land use diligence, planning analysis, and entitlement processing across all sectors of development. She offers extensive knowledge of local and regional planning and zoning regulations in jurisdictions throughout California, with a particular emphasis on Southern California, and is adept in state government code land use regulations, including the California Subdivision Map Act and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Ellen’s broad range of land use experience includes assisting public and private sector clients with assessment of and solutions for a variety of urban planning problems including siting, due diligence investigation and project analysis, asset evaluation, examining historical property records and title exceptions, coordinating and managing project teams, expediting land use and permit applications, and working cooperatively with public agency officials. As part of her work, Ellen regularly appears at public hearings before agencies, boards, commissions, and legislative bodies.

Ellen has worked as a private sector urban planner specializing in land use and zoning regulations for nearly 15 years. Prior to joining Akerman, she worked as a land use planner and a senior land use planner at large Southern California based law firms. She began her career as a project planner specializing in commercial development projects, land subdivisions, and master development planning at an engineering and land surveying firm in San Luis Obispo County. Ellen has been a LEED Accredited Professional since 2008. In addition, Ellen is currently serving as the Co-President of the Westside Urban Forum, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing a platform for uncensored discussion focused on making Los Angeles a more livable place.

Affiliations

Areas of Experience

- Land Use and Development
- Local Government Advocacy
- Hospitality Acquisition and Development
- Residential Land Acquisitions and Development
- Alcohol Beverage
- Restaurant
- Cannabis
- Senior Living and Care
- Environment and Natural Resources
- Brownfields Redevelopment
- Real Estate
- Qualified Opportunity Zones
- Renewable Energy and Electric Power
- Electric Vehicle Infrastructure
- Telecommunications, Fiber, and Wireless Facilities Infrastructure
- Project Finance and Development

Education

- B.S., California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, 2009
- University of California, Berkeley, Cultural Geography and International Area Studies, 2005

Admissions\*

Bars

\* Not admitted to the practice of law

Related Content

- Akerman Sponsors the Westside Prize and Design Awards  
June 10, 2022
- Akerman Sponsors the Westside Prize and Design Awards Ceremony  
June 17, 2021
- 2019 Real Estate Law and Business Forum

- Westside Urban Forum, Co-President
- American Planning Association, Member
- U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), Member

## Honors and Distinctions

- APA National Small Town and Rural Planning Award for Outstanding Special Project Plan, 2010
- U.S. Green Building Council LEED® Accredited Professional (LEED AP)

## Published Work and Lectures

- Los Angeles Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA LA), Westside Urban Forum, City Leader Series, Speaker, May 21, 2021