

Practices

# California Land Use and Entitlements

With some of the most stringent regulations in the United States, California is a challenging state in which to develop real estate projects. Successfully navigating the ever-present—and ever-changing—obstacles requires sophisticated legal counsel with the right mix of experience, knowledge of California’s regulatory regime, and ability to work collaboratively with government agencies.

Akerman represents clients developing properties throughout California for commercial, residential, mixed-use, institutional, and industrial purposes, guiding them through the entire entitlement process—from site evaluation and selection to project approval and opening. As part of a national team that is recognized by *Best Lawyers* as a leader in land use, zoning, and real estate law, we have a strong track record in handling complex, high-profile projects. Our lawyers and planners understand that a sophisticated, comprehensive approach is needed to balance the interests of our clients, the community, and governmental agencies. Our insights into the strategic and business factors involved in land development allow us to formulate strategies that effectively balance governmental advocacy and public relations considerations.

Our team routinely conducts due diligence and entitlements analyses and assesses site development options to determine the highest and best use of the property. In addition, once a site is selected, our team guides clients through the land use and entitlement process with local jurisdictions and also advises on California Environmental Quality Act

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## Connect With Us



**Lisa B.  
Kolieb**

Partner, Real  
Estate

+1 213 533 5947

## Our Team

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## Related Work

- Construction
- Economic Development and Incentives
- Environment and Natural Resources
- Environment and Natural Resources Policy and Regulation
- Florida Land Use and Entitlements
- Illinois Land Use and Entitlements
- Land Use and Development
- Multifamily Development and Acquisitions
- New York Land Use and Zoning
- Real Estate
- Real Estate Acquisitions and Sales
- Real Estate Financing
- Real Estate Litigation
- Residential Land Acquisitions and Development

(CEQA), Subdivision Map Act, Coastal Act, and other local, state, and federal regulatory compliance matters. Moreover, we provide land use guidance and analyses related to the acquisition, disposition, and financing of properties, including distressed assets. Our team also drafts and negotiates development agreements, settlement agreements, and other legal instruments between governmental agencies and private parties to secure development rights and advance our clients' interests.

## What We Do

- Conduct due diligence and entitlements analyses
- Obtain development approvals, regulatory permits, and environmental clearance from government agencies
- Manage large project development teams consisting of political consultants, environmental experts, architects, civil engineers, traffic engineers, economic consultants, legal counsel, client personnel, and other consultants and professionals
- Formulate entitlement and political outreach strategies based on existing political environment, client goals, and timing considerations
- Represent clients in public hearings and other venues before community groups, boards, commissions, and legislative bodies
- Direct government advocacy and public relations strategies
- Advocate on behalf of clients and collaborate with community and industry groups, government agency staff, planning commissioners, and legislative officials in connection with obtaining real estate development approvals
- Establish and maintain strategic partnerships with key public relations professionals, grassroots coalitions, and community organizations

- Develop and manage project budgets
- Defend development projects in litigation against CEQA and other land use-related claims
- Advise on local government contracting issues, compliance with governmental regulations, and political reform
- Assist private developers and public agencies in public-private partnerships (P3)