

People

Stephen K. Tilbrook

Partner, Real Estate
Florida Land Use and Entitlements

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vCard

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Stephen Tilbrook has more than 25 years of experience practicing land use and environmental law, and he focuses his practice on complex land use, development, and environmental matters throughout the state of Florida. He represents property owners, expanding businesses, developers, financial institutions, and institutional clients, including hospitals, universities, regional shopping centers, and real estate investment trusts. He specializes in addressing the land use and environmental challenges of urban and waterfront redevelopment, including brownfields, barrier island redevelopment, downtown development, marina developments, special entertainment districts, and mixed-use development.

As a former economic development coordinator for the City of Fort Lauderdale, Stephen represents clients on all matters of entitlement and land development. With legal experience enhanced by his government service, Stephen uses an insider's perspective to counsel clients and to advocate before government agencies in resolving regulatory challenges and issuing development approvals. He also practices government law and lobbying at the state and local levels, particularly on matters of business development, economic incentives for business growth/relocation, public procurement, and public/private partnerships.

As a former assistant general counsel with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Stephen is well-versed in the regulatory systems that protect the state's environment, and he also advises clients on matters of sustainability and resilience. He represents clients on environmental due diligence, permitting, compliance, assessment, and remediation. Notably, he represents brownfield sites throughout Florida, and he has experience in environmental permitting and cleanup for marinas, gas stations, dry cleaners, chemical manufacturers, and golf courses.

Notable Work

W Fort Lauderdale Resort and Residences: Represented international developer in the due diligence, acquisition,

Areas of Experience

Real Estate
Land Use and Development
Florida Land Use and Entitlements
Environment and Natural Resources
Brownfields Redevelopment
Residential Land Acquisitions and Development
Hospitality Acquisition and Development
Public-Private Partnerships
Environment and Natural Resources Policy and Regulation
Local Government Advocacy
Transportation Regulation and Policy
Financial Services
Cannabis
Renewable Energy and Electric Power

Education

B.A., Tulane University, 1988
J.D., Stetson University College of Law, 1994, cum laude

Admissions

Bars

Florida

Courts

U.S. District Court, Northern District of Florida

Related Content

Record Number of Akerman Lawyers Named to *Best Lawyers* 2026 Guide
August 21, 2025

Akerman Sponsors the 39th Annual Environmental Permitting Summer School
July 15 - July 18, 2025

entitlements, development, licensing, and operation of the \$600 Million W Resort and Residences on Fort Lauderdale Beach.

Stephen Tilbrook Secures Major Conditional Use
Approval for Boater's World Marine Centers
July 02, 2025

Brownfields Redevelopment: Represented developer to achieve the first completed Brownfields redevelopment project in Broward County, and to achieve extensive incentives for a comprehensive redevelopment of the contaminated site in Dania Beach, Florida.

Downtown Special Entertainment District: Represented landowners in establishing and operating the first comprehensive special entertainment district in downtown Fort Lauderdale, through development approvals, special entertainment licenses, and code enforcement issues.

Marina Development and Operations: Represented national marina developer and operator in the design, permitting, construction, and operation of public/private marina projects throughout Florida.

Affiliations

- Florida Design and Construction Professionals, Board of Directors, Executive Committee
- Seacoast Bank, Community Advisory Board
- The Florida Bar
 - Environmental and Land Use Law Section
 - City, County and Local Government Law Section
- Broward County Bar Association
- Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce, Chair, Board of Directors
- Florida Atlantic University, Adjunct Professor of Environmental Law
- Nova Southeastern University
 - Advisory Board for the College of Allopathic Medicine, Chair, 2017
 - Ambassador's Board, Executive Committee
- Urban Land Institute
- Friends of Birch State Park, Vice Chair of Board of Directors
- Riverwalk Fort Lauderdale Trust, Past Chair
- Fort Lauderdale Advisory Boards
 - Marine Advisory Board
 - Beach Redevelopment Advisory Board
 - Historic Preservation Board

Honors and Distinctions

- *Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce*, 2025, Terry Stiles South Florida Leadership Award
- *Best Lawyers*, 2021-2026, Listed in Florida for Real Estate Law and Land Use and Zoning Law
- *South Florida Business Journal*, 2021, Listed as a "Power Leader" in South Florida
- Martindale-Hubbell, AV Rated

Published Work and Lectures

- 39th Annual Environmental Permitting Summer School, Speaker, "Waste Management Programs Overview," July 17, 2025

- 38th Annual Environmental Permitting Summer School, Speaker, “Waste Management Programs Overview,” July 17, 2024
- 37th Annual Environmental Permitting Summer School, Speaker, “Waste Management Programs Overview,” July 19, 2023
- Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce Washington Summit, Moderator, “Federal Legislation and Policy Initiatives for Climate Resilience,” September 20, 2022
- 36th Annual Environmental Permitting Summer School, Speaker, “Waste Management Programs Overview,” July 19, 2022
- *Greater Fort Lauderdale*, Cover Feature, Winter 2021
- Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce, 111th Annual Meeting, Speaker, February 23, 2021
- Sea Level Rise and Sustainability for Fort Lauderdale/Boca Raton Chapter of CREW, Moderator, 2019
- Chamber’s Environmental Permitting Summer School, Speaker, “Capital Investment and Managing Environmental Risk,” 2019
- Florida Chamber’s Environmental Permitting Summer School, Speaker, “Redevelopment and Reuse of Landfills and Brownfields in Florida,” 2018
- NSU’s Shepard Broad College of Law’s Environmental Law Symposium, Speaker, “Environmental Issues in Changing Times,” April 20, 2018
- Moderator for Candidate Forums for the City of Fort Lauderdale Mayoral and Commission Elections, Moderator, March 5, 2018
- Moderator for Candidate Forums for the City of Fort Lauderdale Mayoral and City Commission Elections, Moderator, December 5 and December 7, 2017
- Miami Waterkeeper’s CLE, Speaker, “Home Rule: The Struggle for Local Control in an Age of Super Preemption,” August 25, 2017
- Florida Chamber Foundation’s 31st Annual Environmental Permitting Summer School, Speaker, “Florida Waste Regulation Update And A Look Ahead,” and “Solid Waste Regulation and Reuse of Landfills in Florida,” July 18-21, 2017
- *Daily Business Review*, Author, “Climate Agreement Withdrawal Sends a Message to South Florida,” July 2017
- CREW Fort Lauderdale/Boca Raton’s Rising Seas - Sea Level Rise & South Florida Real Estate Panel, Speaker, “Status of Sea Level Rise in South Florida and the Possible Effects on the South Florida Real Estate Market,” May 3, 2016