



Donna D. Jones

Partner

San Diego
501 West Broadway
19th Floor
San Diego , CA 92101

Tel: 619.338.6524
Fax: 619.234.3815
djones@sheppardmullin.com

PRACTICE AREAS

- Land Use and Natural Resources
- Environmental
- Real Estate

INDUSTRIES

- Climate Change and Clean Technology
- Tribal and Indian Law

OVERVIEW

Donna D. Jones is a partner in the Real Estate, Land Use and Environmental Practice Group in the firm's San Diego office. She has spent her legal career specializing in land use in San Diego.

Practice Areas

Ms. Jones is a land use attorney and registered lobbyist. Her practice focusing on all aspects of compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as well as on advising and representing residential and commercial developers in all phases of the land use regulatory and entitlement process, including environmental compliance. Her experience includes entitlement of master planned communities; urban infill, multi-family and mixed use developments; shopping centers; resort hotels; municipal solid waste landfill expansions; peaker power plants; and more. She also has defended developers in multiple CEQA actions, obtaining dismissals and successful resolution of the matters. Ms. Jones also has experience in conducting land use due diligence, negotiating and drafting development agreements, and appearing before governmental agencies and commissions, including the California Coastal Commission.

Land Use Entitlements

Obtaining entitlements for developers has become increasing complex over the years, and requires relationships with decision-makers and staff as well as in-depth knowledge of federal, state and local laws and the ability to work cooperatively with a wide range of interests to ultimately lead to a successful development. Ms. Jones has permitted thousands of residential units, primarily in the City of San Diego, as well as hotels, shopping centers, and infrastructure projects.

Environmental Compliance

Ms. Jones has specialized in CEQA compliance since 1994, working closely with consultants, clients and lead agencies to ensure adequacy of their EIRs, negative declarations, addendums, exemptions, and more, and defending the resulting CEQA document against challenge by project opponents. In addition, she has successfully represented clients in obtaining federal and state permits from, among other agencies, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the California Department of Fish & Game (CDFG), the Air Pollution Control District (APCD) and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).

Professional Qualifications and Activities

Ms. Jones is very active in the community. She was Chair of the Downtown San Diego Partnership in 2008 and continues to serve on the organization's Executive Committee and Board of Directors. She is on the Board of Directors for the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce, and is Vice Chair of the Chamber's Public Policy Committee, having previously chaired the Infrastructure and Legal Committees.

Ms. Jones is a member of the Mayor's Civic Leadership Team, and was the Mayor's appointee to the Downtown Implementing Committee established by the City Council to monitor implementation of the Downtown Community Plan. She chaired the Financial Reform Subcommittee of the Mayor's Charter Review Commission, helping to develop the financial and other charter reforms that were ultimately approved by the voters of San Diego in June 2008. Ms. Jones also has served on the City of San Diego's Historic Resources Board and its Wetland Advisory Board, and co-chaired the San Diego County Bar Association's Land Use and Environmental Law section.

In addition, Ms. Jones has been active in the Building Industry Association, serving as a member of its Land Use Working Group, its Metropolitan Legislative Committee, and various ad hoc committees. Ms. Jones was appointed by the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority to the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan Technical Advisory Group (ATAG), that is working to guide the preparation of the various Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans being prepared for San Diego County airports.

Ms. Jones is a registered lobbyist with the City of San Diego, the County of San Diego, and the San Diego Regional Airport Authority.

EDUCATION

- J.D., University of Texas, 1990, *with high honors, Order of the Coif, Grand Chancellor*
- B.A., Texas A&M University, 1981, *with honors*

EXPERIENCE

Representative Clients/Projects

Hotel Del Coronado, represents hotel in appeal of coastal development permit to the California Coastal Commission for the Hotel Del Coronado Amended Master Plan, designed to add a new conference center and new guestrooms to this historic hotel.

Allied Waste Industries, Inc./Sycamore, Otay & Ramona Landfills, Master Plan Expansion and Planned Development Permit/Site Development Permit for the Sycamore Landfill and Major Use Permit for the Otay Landfill. Ms. Jones represented the client in obtaining approval of the Master Plan for Sycamore Landfill in November 2008, enabling the landfill to become one of the largest in the County and with the ability to provide solid waste capacity for the region for years to come. This representation has involved review and advice regarding environmental impact reports (EIR) and mitigated negative declarations (MND), drafting permit and CEQA findings, advising on traffic impacts and mitigation requirements, addressing SDG&E transmission line relocation and easement-related issues, street vacations, and defense of CEQA litigation.

Lane Field San Diego Developers, LLC, entitlements for a 275-room luxury hotel with spa, pools, ballrooms and meeting rooms and 30,000 square feet of retail, and for a 525-room luxury hotel with associated pool, spa, ballrooms, and meeting space and

50,000 square feet of retail in the coastal zone on Port Tideland. Ms. Jones successfully represented the client in obtaining its Coastal Development Permit from the California Coastal Commission, and was part of the team that successfully defended the Port's Master Environmental Impact Report from challenge by the UNITE-HERE labor union.

Black Mountain Ranch, LLC/Del Sur Community and Santaluz, entitlements for more than 3,000 homes, 20 percent of which are affordable; commercial uses, two golf courses and more. This representation involved negotiating development agreements, facility financing documents, and ensuring CEQA requirements are met, from review of EIRs and addendum to preparation of candidate findings and defense of CEQA litigation. In addition, her work included advice regarding traffic mitigation, processing of all planned development permits, tentative maps and other entitlements; a successful ballot measure to increase density; formation of two community facilities districts (CFDs) and several maintenance assessment districts (MADs); transportation-related, multi-party agreements; park, fire station and other infrastructure agreements, and more.

The Kiernan Companies, representing client in obtaining a coastal development permit from the City of Carlsbad for the Lumiere Carlsbad Village Hotel, a mixed-use project with 39 hotel rooms, 10 market rate condominiums, 2 affordable housing units, and a ocean-front restaurant.

The Rodney Company, land use advice on Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Plan North, General Plan 2020 and other County of San Diego designations; annexation issues and general real estate and land use for 21,400-acre property, as well as associated real estate issues.

Strategic Hotels & Resorts, Inc./Ritz-Carlton Laguna Niguel, Coastal Development Permit/Site Development Permit and associated CEQA compliance for expansion of the hotel from the City of Dana Point and the California Coastal Commission.

Regency Centers/Costa Verde Shopping Center/California Crossings, Community Plan amendment for retail center expansion and associated permits and environmental review for Costa Verde Shopping Center; CEQA compliance, permits and airport consistency determination for proposed retail center in County of San Diego.

Cardinal Health, permit and CEQA-related advice related to new corporate headquarters in Torrey Hills area, and traffic and community plan-related issues.

Scripps Health, due diligence on zoning and permitting issues for a new medical facility in Rancho Bernardo/Carmel Mountain Ranch.

Shea Homes, Site Development Permit, negotiations on park fees and CEQA compliance for a multi-family development on former golf driving range in Carmel Mountain Ranch.

Graybill Ventures, land use advice for coastal development permit from Centre City Development Corporation (CCDC) and general zoning issues, coordination with the City of San Diego and the Department of Environmental Health, and coordination with City of San Diego and Alpha Project on Winter Homeless Shelter.

JMI Realty, review for CEQA compliance of Subsequent EIR to the Master EIR for Centre City Redevelopment Project for the Ballpark and Ancillary Development Projects, including JMI's East Village Square Master Plan.

Sempra Energy, California Coastal Commission approvals involving the City of Carlsbad; advice on a variety of land use related issues including creation of a handbook on CEQA compliance with PUC Order 131-D.

HONORS

- Ms. Jones has been appointed by San Diego Mayor Jerry Sanders to serve on the Centre City Development Corp. Board of Directors.
- San Diego Super Lawyer, 2011
- Best Lawyers in America, 2011, 2012

MEMBERSHIPS

- Chair, Downtown San Diego Partnership, 2008
- Board of Directors, 2009-present; Vice-chair Public Policy committee 2010; Chair - Infrastructure Committee 2007-2008, Member - Land Use Committee, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce. Chaired the Chamber's Legal Committee from 2004-2006
- Chair, Financial Reform Subcommittee of the City of San Diego Charter Review Commission
- Mayor's appointee, San Diego's Downtown Implementing Committee, overseeing implementation of the Downtown Community Plan Update
- Member, working groups addressing the City of San Diego's General Plan update
- Member, Land Use Working Group, Building Industry Association's Metropolitan Legislative Committee
- Former member, City of San Diego Historic Resources Board and Wetland Advisory Board
- Former Co-Chair, Environmental Law/Land Use Law Section Committee, San Diego County Bar Association
- Member, San Diego County Bar Association
- Member, Sections on Land Use and Real Property, California Bar Association
- Member, Lawyer's Club

ARTICLES

- Sheppard Mullin Attorney Will Head Downtown San Diego Partnership, *Los Angeles Daily Journal*, January 22, 2008
- CEQA and Climate Change: Is Your EIR Defensible?, *San Diego Daily Transcript*, October 31, 2007
- New Transportation Fee Threatens to Cripple County's Commercial, Industrial Development, May 17, 2005
- Conversion and Collocation: Viable Tools for Increasing Housing Supply, *San Diego Daily Transcript*, March 22, 2005

Real Estate & Construction Law Blog Articles

- "Court of Appeal Confirms Applicability of Brown Act to Settlements Entered Into by Local Governments in Closed Session", April 5, 2006
- "Ripeness Doctrine and Futility Exception Both Require Submission and Denial of a 'Meaningful Application'", November 16, 2005

- "Court of Appeal Emphasizes Importance of Development Agreements", October 13, 2005
- "New Transportation Fee Threatens to Cripple County's Commercial, Industrial Development", May 17, 2005
- "Conversion and Collocation: Viable Tools for Increasing Housing Supply", March 17, 2005

EVENTS

- What Does The End of Redevelopment Mean For You?
- SD Redevelopment Roundtable Series