



→ Kira T. Conlon

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Kira T. Conlon is a partner in the Real Estate, Energy, Land Use & Environmental Practice Group in the firm's Los Angeles office. She also is a member of the Multifamily Housing and Cannabis teams, and serves as a Leader of the firm's Los Angeles Women Lawyers Group and on the Recruiting Committee.

Areas of Practice

Kira represents public and private sector clients in real estate development. She advises developers through all phases of the approval process and environmental compliance. Her work includes residential, commercial, studio, hotel, industrial, campus, and mixed-use development projects. Kira has deep experience leading complicated development projects in the City of Los Angeles and throughout California. Her land use experience includes advising lenders, prospective buyers, and owners on development opportunities, risks, and value-based strategies through due diligence investigations; negotiating and obtaining complex land use entitlements such as General Plan Amendments, Zone Changes, Development Agreements, Vesting Tentative Tract Maps, and Conditional Use Permits; and appearing before governmental agencies, commissions, and elected bodies. Kira also counsels commercial cannabis companies on state and local regulatory compliance issues, including negotiating and obtaining local permits to operate. In addition, Kira represents developers and management in traditional labor law issues, including union negotiations.

Kira's extensive entitlement experience is complemented by her strategic advice on the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), including ways to streamline review for transit-oriented infill development and affordable housing projects. Kira leads numerous mixed-income and affordable housing projects that leverage local and state incentive programs and streamlining tools, such as State Density Bonus, Transit Oriented Communities, SB 35, AB 1197, SB 743, and SB 375.

Kira serves on the Board of Directors of the Little Tokyo Service Center and is President-Elect of the Japanese American Bar Association. In 2018, she was honored with the firm's inaugural Bob Williams Award, which recognizes Sheppard Mullin associates who provide exceptional service for the betterment of the firm and the community.

Honors

Southern California Rising Stars, *Super Lawyers*, 2020-2022

Bob Williams Award which recognizes Sheppard Mullin associates who provide exceptional service for the betterment of the firm and the community, 2018

U.S.-Japan Council Emerging Leaders Program, 2014

Experience

Representative Experience

- Representing multiple clients on affordable housing projects in Los Angeles, including a 100 percent affordable permanent supportive housing project on City-owned property near a major transit stop with up to 80 units; a 100 percent affordable Transit Oriented Communities (TOC) Tier 4 project with up to 135 units; and a mixed-income Density Bonus project with 69 affordable units that is utilizing modular construction.
- Representing a California university client in connection with the strategic expansion of its life sciences campus, including master plan development negotiations, CEQA counseling, and community outreach.
- Representing multiple clients on mixed-use hotel projects around Los Angeles, including an approximately 350,000-square-foot mixed-use project in Chinatown; a mixed-use, 1,000-key hotel project in Downtown Los Angeles; a mixed-use, 114-key hotel project in Hollywood; a mixed-use, 160-key hotel project in Hollywood; an adaptive reuse project for a 66-key boutique hotel in the Arts District; and a 450-key mixed-use hotel and event center in Downtown Los Angeles. All of these projects require multiple discretionary entitlements from the City of Los Angeles and several implicate potential historic resources and/or historic districts. In addition to managing the environmental review process and development team, Kira advises clients on community and historic preservation engagement, garnering political support from elected officials and CEQA litigation risk assessment.
- Represented a studio client on an 18-story, mixed-use, creative office project on a 1.55-acre site in Hollywood. Kira helped manage the environmental review process and team. The project required several entitlements, including a General Plan Amendment, Zone Change/Height District Change, Ordinance to modify street designation standards, Conditional Use Permit and Site Plan Review. Kira also advised on all environmental issues, strategy to avoid or win litigation, community engagement and political support from elected officials.
- Represented a studio client on entitlements for its marquee studio property with approximately 400,000 square feet of creative office buildings, post-production facilities and parking structures within their historic studio campus in Hollywood. The project was a model of success. The client avoided administrative appeals and no CEQA lawsuits were filed – a rare feat in Hollywood development.
- Represented a municipality in the acquisition of an approximately 700-acre airport property. Kira managed the title review component of the transaction, which included nearly 150 parcels, and the final issuance of the title insurance commitment.
- Represented a developer in a public-private partnership for the development of a 400,000-square-foot retail space on a former industrial site. Kira's role included revising entitlements, an addendum to the Project EIR, street vacations and acquisition of portions of the project site. Kira also advised on all CEQA, environmental remediation and local land use permitting issues.
- Provided CEQA and NEPA counseling on the development of a solar generation project. Project approvals sought included a Conditional Use Permit, right-of-way grant from the Bureau of Land Management and certification of related CEQA and NEPA documents. The project involved analysis of agricultural, global warming, water quality, cultural resources, biology and cumulative impacts.
- Drafted and negotiated a tribal consultation agreement on behalf of a developer, allocating rights and responsibilities to the developer and unrecognized tribe in connection with a proposed coastal development.

- Conducted land use due diligence in preparation for the purchase and sale of commercial property in the cities of Thousand Oaks and San Diego. Kira advised the purchaser of zoning compliance issues prior to closing.
- Advised the purchaser of a commercial business center in the City of Orange regarding reinstatement of Association and amendments to governing documents and CC&Rs.
- Drafted and negotiated easement agreements with the County of San Luis Obispo on behalf of a property owner, allocating rights and responsibilities for long-term property use, access and maintenance.
- Represented a developer in connection with the entitlement and environmental review of over one million square feet of residential, office and entertainment uses in Los Angeles, including the preservation and rehabilitation of a historic theatre and recording studio.

Articles

Real Estate, Land Use & Environmental Law Blog Posts

- "City of Los Angeles Developer Contribution Ban Goes Into Effect," June 14, 2022
- "Court of Appeal Holds No-Project Alternative Analysis May Mean More When Conservation is an Option and Reinforces Low Barrier to Entry Under the Exhaustion Doctrine," April 20, 2022
- "California Housing Legislation Effective in 2021," January 11, 2021
- "California Housing Legislation 2020," September 30, 2020
- "City of Los Angeles Releases Draft Hollywood Community Plan Update," June 16, 2017
- "Update – City of Los Angeles Affordable Housing Linkage Fee," June 14, 2017
- "Voters Overwhelmingly Approve 'Build Better LA' Initiative Resulting in New Affordable Housing and Local Hiring Requirements For Developers," November 11, 2016
- "New LA Ordinances 'Clean Up, Green Up' Industry in Residential 'Toxic Hotspot' Neighborhoods," May 23, 2016
- "New Live/Work Ordinance Adopted by L.A. City Council," February 24, 2016
- "Redevelopment Strikes Back," October 9, 2015
- "Governor Signs Off on New Tax-Increment Financing Structure," October 7, 2014
- "No Private Attorney General Fees for Homeowner," December 26, 2013

Memberships

President, Japanese American Bar Association

Board of Directors, Little Tokyo Service Center

Board of Directors, Japanese American Bar Association Educational Foundation

Past President, New Leadership Advisory Counsel of the Japanese American National Museum

Practices

Real Estate, Energy, Land Use & Environmental
CEQA Documentation and Defense
Historic Preservation
International Reach
Japan
Public-Private Partnerships

Industries

Cannabis
Multifamily Housing

Education

J.D. Southwestern Law School, 2012, Special Project Editor, *Southwestern Law Review*
B.A., University of California, San Diego, 2007, *magna cum laude*, *Phi Beta Kappa*

Clerkships

Extern to the Honorable Consuelo B. Marshall, U.S. District Court for the Central District of California

Admissions

California
U.S. District Court for the Central District of California