



Niran S. Somasundaram Senior Counsel

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#### **Areas of Focus**

- Land Use
- Environmental Law
- Air Quality / Climate Change / Greenhouse Gases
- Contaminated Property
- Litigation and Dispute Resolution

Niran focuses his practice on land use and environmental matters. He frequently advises landowners, developers and public agency clients in land use land use and environmental regulatory matters and has experience conducting land use due diligence, preparing and processing entitlement applications, ensuring compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and other land use and environmental legislation, and representing clients in administrative proceedings in front of federal, regional and state agencies, including regional and the state water board, state environmental agencies, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Niran also regularly advises and counsels clients regarding compliance with Local Air District and California Air Resources Board rules and regulations, and has experience designing and entitling renewable energy infrastructure, including electric vehicle charging facilities. He has experience drafting and negotiating Development Agreements and leases with municipalities and counties throughout California.

Niran further has experience representing both plaintiffs and defendants in environmental and land use litigation in federal and state courts, including preparation of injunctions, pleadings, motion practice, written discovery, experts, and other trial preparation.

# Representative Work

Defending an industrial rendering facility in an administrative enforcement action brought by the



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South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) premised on SCAQMD Rule 415 governing such facilities, and subsequent litigation regarding the facility's compliance with SCAQMD Rule 415.

Representing an industrial cement recycling facility in responding to Notices of Violation (NOVs) from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) alleging particulate emissions in excess of permitted levels.

Assisting a large residential development in creating a legally defensible quantification methodology for the proportion of greenhouse gas reduction required to demonstrate compliance with State of California and CARB climate goals.

Advising numerous private developers and municipalities on compliance with municipalities Climate Action Plans, Local Air District Air Quality Plans (AQPs), the CARB Scoping Plan, and the federal Clean Air Act.

Advising numerous private developers and municipalities on development of Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) methodology to quantify mobile emissions associated with development projects.

Advising numerous private developers and municipalities on compliance with Air District regulations governing Criteria Air Pollutant (CAP), Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), Toxic Air Contaminant (TAC), and Greenhouse Gas Emissions associated with construction and operations of developments in urban and rural areas.

#### **Publications**

"Building an Affordable California Act Offers Real CEQA Reform for Essential Projects," coauthor, Legal Alert (November 2025)

"Justices Widen Gap Between Federal, Calif. Enviro Reviews," co-author, Law 360 (June 2025)

"The Supreme Court Takes Aim at NEPA," co-author, Environmental Legal Alert (May 2025)

"Trucks, Trains, and Automobiles: Untangling the Status of California's Vehicle Emission Waivers," author, Air Quality/Climate Change/Greenhouse Gases Legal Alert (February 2025)

"Key 2025 CEQA Updates for Residential Developers: Extended Exemption and Streamlining Options," co-author, Land Use Legal Alert (January 2025)

"California's Clean Air Act Waiver Victory is in for a Wild Ride," author, *Daily Journal* (January 2025)

- "The Builder's Remedy: What Every Developer Should Know," co-author, Land Use Law Legal Alert (March 2023)
- "Climate Change Case Could Lead to Resurrection of 'Nondelegation'," *Daily Journal* (November 2021)
- "An In-Depth Look at the Oakland A's Proposed New Stadium Project," Land Use Law Alert (September 2021)
- "Stop Syar Expansion Decision Demonstrates the Uphill Battle for CEQA Plaintiffs," Land Use Law Alert (August 2021)
- "Calif. Warehouse GHG Proposal Would Likely Face Lawsuits," Law360 (March 2021)
- "DC Court of Appeals Strikes Down Trump EPA's ACE Rule," co-author, *Daily Journal* (January 2021)
- "Supreme Court of California Weighs In on Blanket Categorization of Well Construction Permit Approvals as Ministerial," Land Use Law Alert (September 2020)
- "Opening the Golden Door: The Fourth District Shines a Light on CEQA Compliant Greenhouse Gas Mitigation," co-author, Land Use Law Alert (June 2020)
- "Recent Trends in EPA-Manufacturing Enforcement Actions," co-author, *Industry Today* (June 2020)
- "New Bay Area Shelter-in-Place Orders Allow for the Resumption of Environmental Site Remediation and Agricultural Operations," co-author, *Environmental Law Alert* (April 2020)
- "U.S. EPA's Temporary Enforcement Policy Provides Needed Guidance During the COVID-19 Pandemic," co-author, *Environmental Law Alert* (March 2020)

#### **Press**

- "La Cañada Flintridge Doubles Down on Builder's Remedy Fight," The Real Deal (May 2023)
- "How One City's NIMBY Attitude is Being Challenged by Developers Desperate to Build," Los Angeles Times (April 2023)
- "Biden's Plan for EVs," ABC 10 News (August 2021)
- "Biden Environment Agenda Spurs Early Pivots, Attacks in Court," Bloomberg Law (April 2021)

### **Honors & Awards**

Best Lawyers (2023-2026); Best Lawyers: One to Watch (2025-2026)

California Lawyers Association, Wiley W. Manuel Pro Bono Legal Services Award (2022-2023)

### **Professional Affiliations**

**Urban Land Institute** 

# **Academic Distinctions**

Ecology Law Quarterly, Programs Director, Managing Editor

Environmental Conservation Outreach, SLPS Leader

# **Education**

J.D., University of California, Berkeley School of Law (2016)

B.A., cum laude University of California, Los Angeles (2013)

# **Admissions and Courts**

California