



Robin R. Baral

Partner

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Areas of Focus

- Land Use
- Public Revenue: Rates, Fees and Charges



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Robin enjoys guiding clients through nearly every aspect of the land use planning, development, and entitlement process, and obtaining local, state and federal permits that are often required for land development and public infrastructure. Robin has extensive experience working with developers and local agencies throughout California, negotiating complex entitlement packages, and conducting environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). His particular expertise lies in implementing strategies to expedite project approvals by harnessing recent changes to state housing laws and planning and zoning laws.

Robin has worked with clients in due diligence, permitting, entitlement, and public financing for nearly every type of residential project, ranging from small lot subdivisions to large urban infill sites, mixed-use master plans and multi-phased development agreements. He also works with clients to develop permitting strategies for new and emerging technologies related to urban mobility, transportation, and public and private infrastructure. He is particularly skilled at providing strategic counsel in response to legislation and regulatory mandates, ranging from housing policy to water management, waste disposal and recycling.

His infrastructure work includes permitting and financing of groundwater and surface water treatment plants, solar and wind energy facilities, wastewater treatment plants, water bottling facilities, rail trans-loading facilities, and waste disposal facilities. Robin also provides sophisticated advice on matters of public

finance and dispute resolution for state and local taxes. He works well with clients and bond counsel to establish tax and financing solutions. He has assisted numerous cities, counties and special districts with rate-making proceedings, voter-approved taxes, and the adoption of impact fees. This experience has provided Robin with a thorough understanding of the constitutional limits of local taxation and land use exactions.

Lastly, Robin has served as the lead attorney in a broad range of litigation matters. His cases span both the defense of, and challenges to land use entitlements, CEQA approvals, municipal finance mechanisms (Proposition 218, impact fees, CFD financing), challenges to business license taxes, ballot initiatives, and water rights determinations.

Representative Work

Represented a residential infill developer in obtaining entitlements for a 26-story high-rise in the City of Berkeley; the project was approved unanimously by the Zoning Appeals Board with no appeal to City Council. This was the first project approved in Berkeley to surpass the City's 180-foot special height limit under the Downtown Area Plan.

Represented a master plan developer in the entitlement of a 690-acre specific plan consisting of up to 2,700 units and 250,000 square feet of commercial space, with onsite mitigation of biological resources, through a detailed open space preservation and parks plan.

Represented a developer in the reapproval and extension of a development agreement, specific plan amendment, and related entitlements for 2,500 residential units plus retail, commercial, light industrial and other employment-generating uses.

Representing numerous developers in processing Builder's Remedy applications, SB 330 applications, and other streamlined or ministerial housing approvals.

Representing a life sciences developer in standing up a new life sciences hub in the East Bay Area.

Representing a group of car dealerships in litigating the constitutionality of a local, gross receipts business license tax.

Publications

"EPA and Army Corps Release Joint Proposed Rule Revising WOTUS Regulations," co-author, Environmental Law Alert (November 2025)

"Options for Rebuilding Following Southern California's Fires," co-author, Land Use Law Alert (January 2025)

“Clearing the Fog Around California’s “Builder’s Remedy” and Housing Element Certification” co-author, Land Use Legal Alert (January 2025)

“AB 1287 Makes Technical Changes to State Density Bonus Law to Maximize Housing Production,” co-author, Land Use + Government Legal Alert (December 2023)

“California’s Top Three Housing Bills to Track for 2024,” co-author, Real Estate Legal Alert (November 2023)

“HCD Reviews Coastal Height Limits,” Land Use Law Alert (August 2022)

“Old East Davis Decision Preserves the Deference Granted to Cities in Interpreting Subjective Standards,” Land Use Law Alert (February 2022)

“California Housing Crisis Persists Despite Legislative Breakthroughs,” *Real Property Law Reporter* (January 2022)

“2021 Legislative Update: Housing Advocates Score Key Wins,” Land Use Law Alert (October 2021)

“AB 701 Continues the Recent Trend in California to Regulate Warehouse Distribution Centers,” Land Use Law Alert (October 2021)

“An In-Depth Look at the Oakland A’s Proposed New Stadium Project,” Land Use Law Alert (September 2021)

“A Recent Ruling Involving Unlined Landfills Highlights the Pitfalls of Relying on Categorical Exemptions under CEQA,” Land Use Law Alert (September 2021)

“A Draft Technical Advisory Offers Guidance on Streamlining CEQA Review for Sustainable Transportation,” Land Use Law Alert (July 2021)

“Records Retention Policies and CEQA Compliance,” *Urban Water Institute Newsletter* (October 2020)

Presentations

“House Forum and Interactive Workshop” speaker, Monterey Attainable Housing Forum (November 2025)

“The Future of Downtowns: Can Office-to-Housing Conversions Really Help?” moderator, Bay Area Council (September 2024)

“Housing the Bay Area: Moving from Crisis to Solutions,” panelist, Northern California Chapter of Corenet (August 2024)

Press

“Hanson Bridgett Announces 2025 Partner Promotions,” Hanson Bridgett Press Release (January 2025)

”Housing project at S.F. parking lot stalled for a decade. Now its developer plans to supersize it,
“ *San Francisco Chronicle* (February 2024)

“Developers Seizing ‘Supersized’ Density Bonus Opportunity,” *Daily Journal* (February 2024)

Honors & Awards

Super Lawyers, Land Use & Zoning; Environmental; Real Estate (2015-2022)

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

Professional Affiliations

Bay Area Council – Housing Committee Co-Chair (2024-present)

Urban Land Institute – San Francisco District, Public Private Partnership Local Product Council (2024-present), Member (2007-present)

Midland School, Board of Trustees (2023-present)

Academic Distinctions

California Department of Justice, Division of Public Rights, Land Law section, Law School Honors Program (2009)

Education

J.D., Loyola Law School Los Angeles (2010)

B.A., University of California, Berkeley (2004)

Admissions and Courts

California