



PUBLIC SECTOR LAND USE AND ZONING

GOVERNMENT DIVISION

With the State of Florida stepping back from its involvement in land use and zoning matters, local land use and zoning is more important than ever in determining the destiny of our communities. These trends empower innovation but also remove safety nets. We counsel local governments on choosing their path wisely and implementing their vision.

We can assist you with establishing and amending state-mandated comprehensive plans, small area plans and land development regulations, as well as reviewing and approving applications for planned unit developments, plats, site plans and building permits. We counsel local governments when they act as developers, either alone or in partnership with a private developer, and we can counsel you. We pride ourselves on our creativity, knowledge and persistence in ensuring that our local government clients achieve the results they desire in developing their communities.

Our team is unique in that we have partners who are both certified planners and board-certified municipal attorneys. It is our daily bread and butter to work seamlessly with municipal staff, boards and elected officials to achieve your goals. We have numerous attorneys with broad and deep experience in and dedication to public land use and zoning matters, both transactional and litigation.

We draft ordinances and resolutions, and sit with boards, councils and commissions dealing with land development matters, such as Planning and Zoning Boards, Local Planning Agencies and Zoning Boards of Adjustment. We advise these boards, individually and collectively, in their handling of public hearings, with particular attention to the quasi-judicial nature of many of the proceedings. When it is apparent that a particular regulation or application may result in a denial or a challenge, we work with our litigators and appellate lawyers to lay the groundwork for a successful outcome for the local government.

We also collaborate with our real estate and private land use and zoning teams to provide comprehensive help

to governmental agencies undertaking public development projects, such as police and fire stations, sports arenas and stadiums, commercial parks, industrial parks, marinas and sewer treatment facilities.

Because of our role as the municipal attorney or special counsel for such a wide variety of communities, we are uniquely adaptable. We see trending issues emerge simultaneously in communities large and small, pro-development and anti-development, sophisticated and struggling, so we develop experience more rapidly and from a bird's eye perspective. We perceive that there are multiple possible approaches, and understand how to tailor our solutions to the demands of these diverse situations. We frequently write, speak and serve in professional organizations related to land use and zoning, keeping up to date on the most pressing current issues, like adapting to the changes that sea level rise will bring.

Our experience in helping numerous newly formed local governments to implement their vision through the adoption of their first land development codes and comprehensive plans gives us unique insights into these processes.

OUR INSIGHT

Individual development decisions are important in building a community. But if the regulations are out of step with the community's vision, investing time in revising them is critical. Because there is only so much change communities, applicants, staffs and officials can absorb at one time, incremental changes may work best. If you move slowly enough to bring along all stakeholders with you, the change will be lasting and meaningful.