

Jane Ellison Usher

Partner, Los Angeles Office

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PRACTICE GROUPS

- Environmental & Public Law
- Land Use
- Water Law
- Academic Institutions
- Oil & Gas/Energy
- Real Estate
- Litigation

EDUCATION

Cornell University, A.B., *Phi Beta Kappa*, 1977

University of Chicago, J.D., *Phi Delta Phi*, 1980



PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Jane Ellison Usher is a partner in the Firm's Los Angeles office. She is a member of the Firm's Environmental and Public Law, Real Estate, Litigation and related practices. Ms. Usher represents private, public, and nonprofit entities in the resolution of their government and regulatory affairs. With thirty years of expertise in land use, planning, zoning, environmental, real estate development, CEQA, Brown Act, Public Records Act, ethics, ordinances, legislation, municipal and administrative law, Ms. Usher advises her clients from the inception of a government matter, through agency hearings and determinations, to the conclusion of any litigation that might result.

For two decades prior to joining Musick Peeler in 2014, Ms. Usher served the City of Los Angeles in several senior appointed roles. These included Counsel to Mayor Tom Bradley (1989-1993), Alternate on the Board of the Los Angeles Transportation Commission (1991-1993), President of the Los Angeles City Planning Commission (2005-2009), and Senior Assistant City Attorney and Member of the Executive Management Team of the Office of the City Attorney (2009-2013). She negotiated the City's complex real estate matters, including for the LA Live football stadium, NBC Universal, and USC;

litigated the City's highest profile cases, involving urban renewal, planning and development, building and safety, infrastructure, code enforcement, outdoor advertising and signage, medical marijuana, homelessness, and constitutional questions; and drafted and successfully defended many of the most innovative and ground-breaking ordinances, policies, and actions of the City. Ms. Usher has spoken extensively on zoning, environmental and municipal law, including on the important relationships between property owners, their neighbors and social justice.

COMMUNITY AND PRIOR SERVICE

Ms. Usher serves on the board of the Play Equity Fund, an outgrowth of the 1984 LA Olympics, which seeks to even the playing field for all student athletes, especially those of color. Formerly, Ms. Usher was the Assistant Dean to the USC Annenberg School. As an adjunct member of the USC Gould School of Law faculty, she taught a "ripped from the headlines" course entitled *The Law of the City*. Ms. Usher was associate general counsel to the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics, and general counsel to the United States Football League, the America's Cup sailing competition, and the men's and women's professional beach volleyball associations. Ms. Usher began her legal career at the law firm of Manatt, Phelps, Rothenberg & Tunney. Ms. Usher's additional civic commitments have included Brown University, the Center for Early Education, the Constitutional Rights Foundation, Cornell University, the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council, Harvard Westlake School, and Wilshire Boulevard Temple. She received Tree People's Evergreen Award and the AIA California Council's Presidential Citation.

REPRESENTATIVE RECENT MATTERS

- Usher advises agricultural, water, oil and gas industry clients with respect to regulatory permitting issues, including air, land use, wastes, species, asbestos, and groundwater monitoring, and the redesignation of water quality uses consistent with recent litigation. 04.19.2021.
- Musick Peeler partners Usher and Ken Perkins modernize leases and lease disclosures for university client, in conformance with changes in City and State rent-control and related laws. 04.15.2021.
- Usher mediation brief leads Caltrans to withdraw its eminent domain action seeking a taking over client's Malibu beachfront property and to pay client's legal fees. 02.18.2021.
- Usher completes unchallenged CEQA project update, authorizing client to construct additional recharge basins in support of its wastewater treatment project. 01.17.2021.
- Musick Peeler partners Usher and Juan Torres defeat ant-SLAPP motion and proceed with trespass and damage suit against radio station operators. 09.14.2020.
- West LA Area Planning Commission grants Usher's appeal and denies project approval to national automobile dealership seeking to create a vast car parking lot near the Marina Wetlands. 08.07.2019.
- City of Anaheim and Usher, on behalf of her short-term rental clients, complete their agreement for continued rental operation under a strict, model short-term rental ordinance. 07.19.2019.
- Usher and fellow Musick Peeler partner Cheryl Orr successfully overturn long-standing constitutional precedent for water client, following briefing and argument to the California Supreme Court. 02.21.2018.

- Musick Peeler partners Usher and Steve Elie obtain victory for water district client in CEQA lawsuit challenging client's proposed wastewater treatment plant. 05.19.2017.

EVENTS

- Usher leads community Town Hall presentation on the City of Log Angeles Transportation Oriented Communities (TOC) Guidelines with the City of Los Angeles Planning Department. 06.23.2021.
- Usher's article questioning the proposed state legislation to largely abolish single-family zoning is published in the Larchmont Buzz, the Larchmont Chronicle, and the Los Feliz Ledger. 06.01.2021.
- Usher moderates the Westside Urban Forum panel entitled "A New Vision for the Westside - X 4," answering the question: Will the Westside change dramatically, or maintain the status quo? 11.22.2019.
- Usher presents the 2018 State CEQA Guidelines and addresses all updates at the CEQA Panel for LACBA Environmental Law Spring Symposium. 04.12. 2019.
- Usher speaks on best land use strategies and practices to a panel hosted by the California Charter Schools Association Attorney Network. 09.10.2014.

NEWS

- Musick Peeler Attorneys Advise on \$90 Million School Construction Project 06.01.2021

ADMISSIONS & PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

- State Bar of California
- United States Federal District Court for the Central District of California