

Miles H. Imwalle

Partner

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Details

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Miles Imwalle is the chair of the Real Estate practice group. He advises clients on all aspects of the land use entitlement process and has shepherded some of the largest, most complex and controversial projects through the state's notoriously difficult entitlement process, finding the most practical, efficient, and defensible path to obtaining entitlements.

Miles has a sophisticated understanding of the byzantine regulatory process development projects face, including compliance with state and federal environmental review statutes (NEPA and CEQA), the federal and California Endangered Species Acts, the Williamson Act, emerging California regulations addressing climate change, and local zoning and related laws and regulations. He understands these projects often require approvals from several local, regional, state, and federal agencies, each with different objectives and cultures. Miles works creatively and collaboratively with regulators to navigate potential pitfalls while seeking pragmatic solutions to seemingly intractable problems.

Miles also has developed a deep interest and expertise in California's evolving housing laws and has pioneered the use of recent legislation, including SB 35, the Housing Accountability Act, and recent reforms to the State Density Bonus Law.

Miles works with a variety of clients and has successfully navigated entitlements for projects ranging from corporate R&D and office campuses, mix-use, housing rich transit-oriented developments, industrial facilities, and renewable energy projects. His work has helped with the approval of thousands of residential units, millions of square feet of office and R&D development and gigawatts of renewable energy.

Miles earned his J.D. from New York University School of Law where he served as an articles editor for the New York University Environmental Law Journal. He earned his B.A. with honors from Dartmouth College.

Notable Representations

Google Downtown West Project

Serving as CEQA counsel in Google's efforts to redevelop an underutilized 81-acre area surrounding San Jose's Diridon Station into a new mixed-use extension of the downtown area. At full buildout, the Downtown West project will include 7.3 million square feet of office, 5,900 residential units, and 500,000 square feet of retail and other uses. The team of Coblentz attorneys advised on preparation of an Environmental Impact Report and negotiation of a Development Agreement, among other aspects of the project, and continues to advise on project implementation.

Apple Park

Served as land use, CEQA and natural resource permitting counsel to Apple in connection with its iconic 3.4 million-square-foot Apple Park campus in Cupertino, California. This high-profile project was approved in 2014 without litigation and was designated by the Governor and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) as the first environmental leadership project in California under AB 900, the CEQA Streamlining legislation.

The Rise (formerly known as Vallco Town Center)

Representing Sand Hill Property Company in its efforts to transform the failed Vallco Mall in Cupertino into a vibrant, mixed-use "town center" that is proposed to include over 2,400 residential units, 400,000 square feet of retail and entertainment uses, and approximately 1.9 million square feet of office. The Rise was the first mixed-income project in the state to be approved under SB 35. Miles was also part of the litigation team that successfully defended this approval.

Walnut Creek BART Project

Assisted with the entitlement of a mixed-use, transit-oriented development project at the BART Station in Walnut Creek, California. This 16-acre site is being developed with approximately 600 multi-family residential units, and approximately 22,000 square feet of retail use, adding significant density immediately adjacent to high quality transit.

San Ramon City Center Project

Assisted Sunset Development Company with obtaining entitlements for its mixed-use, public-private partnership "City Center" project in San Ramon. The project consists of a mix of residential, retail, commercial, and civic components.

Panoche Valley Solar Project

Represented Consolidated Edison Development in all efforts to entitle, defend and settle ensuing litigation in relation to the controversial 250 MW Panoche Valley Solar project. The project required approvals from multiple local, state and federal agencies, and both CEQA and NEPA environmental review documents. Successfully assisted the defense of three lawsuits, ultimately ending in a comprehensive settlement that includes placing over 25,000 acres of habitat into a conservation easement.

Honors & Awards

Miles is listed in *The Best Lawyers in America®* in the Land Use and Zoning Law category. He is recommended by Legal 500 USA (2014–2017) in the areas of land use and zoning; environment: litigation and transactional/regulatory; and alternative/renewable energy. He is also recognized as a top land use and zoning attorney by Northern California Super Lawyers. In 2012, The Recorder named Miles among its 50 “Fast Track” lawyers, a list that recognizes California attorneys whose early accomplishments indicate they will be tomorrow’s top lawyers and leaders.

Publications & Speaking Engagements

- Miles’ recent publications include:
 - [“New CEQA Exemption for Housing Development Projects: What it Means for Developers”](#) (July 2, 2025)
 - [“There’s Always This Year? 2025 Legislature Considers CEQA Reforms to Spur Housing”](#) (May 19, 2025)
 - [“Supreme Court Impact Fee Decision Creates Opportunities for Developers and Property Owners”](#) (June 11, 2024)
 - [“2023 Housing Legislation Overview – Major Signed and Pending Bills”](#) (September 28, 2023)
 - [“2022 Housing Legislation Overview – Major Pending Bills on the Governor’s Desk”](#) (September 13, 2022)
 - [“2020 Housing Legislation Overview: Started with a Bang, Ended with a Whimper”](#) (September 9, 2020)
 - [“Calif. Housing Approval Law Is A Strong Tool For Developers,”](#) Law360 (July 24, 2020)
 - [“Court Rulings Demonstrate SB 35’s Potential To Obtain Swift, Certain Approval Of Housing Developments”](#) (May 13, 2020)

Education

- J.D., New York University School of Law (2003)
- B.A., Dartmouth College (1997)