

Alan A. Sozio

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Pronouns: he, him, his

A recognized figure in his field of eminent domain, Alan Sozio has played a lead role in numerous multi-parcel property acquisition projects throughout California. In addition to providing eminent domain legal services to numerous cities, special districts and housing authorities, Alan has since 2001 served as special acquisition counsel for the Alameda Corridor-East Construction Authority in property acquisitions spanning more than 11 grade separation projects in the San Gabriel Valley. He is the co-author of the seminal practice guide used by public agency practitioners entitled "Eminent Domain: A Step-by-Step Guide to the Acquisition of Real Property," and is the author of the popular eminent domain blog, "Right to Take | Doing it the Right (of) Way—Recommended Steps for the Acquisition of Real Property by Eminent Domain." He is active in the eminent domain legal community where he is a frequent speaker and author on topics related to condemnation.

Alan counsels public clients on early considerations and pre-acquisition activities necessary to the condemnation process. He litigates eminent domain and inverse condemnation actions and, when necessary, takes the matters through trial. Alan also drafts transactional documents, including purchase and sale agreements, right-of-entry agreements and leases, and provides advice regarding state and federal relocation assistance. He has appeared in both open and closed session with city councils, agency boards and other legislative bodies to speak on matters related to the acquisition of property and the condemnation process.

In addition to eminent domain actions, Alan litigates matters involving physical and regulatory takings, contractual and boundary disputes, quiet title, unlawful detainer matters, land use and real estate issues.

In 2005, Alan successfully completed the Los Angeles County Bar Association's Trial Advocacy Program. Thereafter, on a pro bono basis, Alan prosecuted to verdict criminal cases, and obtained favorable bench rulings in evidentiary trials, for the cities of Anaheim

PRACTICES

Eminent Domain

Environmental Land Use and Natural Resources

Inverse Condemnation

Litigation

Public Law

Real Estate and Business Law

EDUCATION

J.D., University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law, 1996

B.A., Political Science, University of California, San Diego, 1990

ADMISSION

State Bar of California

United States District Court for the Central District of California

United States District Court for the Southern District of California

AFFILIATIONS

International Right of Way Association

Los Angeles County Bar Association

State Bar of California Real

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Property Section, Inverse Condemnation/Eminent Domain Subsection (South)

and Inglewood.

Alan is a Brown Belt in the Israeli self-defense system of Krav Maga, a Blue Belt in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, and is a former “AA” rated competitive beach volleyball player. When not at the office, he enjoys surfing, skiing, and relaxing with his family on the beach.

RESULTS

Burke Secures Eminent Domain Jury Verdict for San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments

Jury Trial Victory in JPA Condemnation Case

PUBLICATIONS

Liens

Condeming Future Interests – Part 2

Condemning Future Interests – Part 1

Excess Condemnation – Part 2

Excess Condemnation – Part 1

Eminent Domain: A Step-by-Step Guide to the Acquisition of Real Property

RECOGNITIONS

American Jurisprudence Awards, Property, Evidence, and Legal Writing, 1996

Graduated third in his class from McGeorge School of Law

Martindale-Hubble AV Rating

Order of the Coif, 1996

Selected to Southern California Super Lawyers and Rising Stars

Traynor Society

REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

- Represented a public agency in eminent domain action with a jury verdict win, in which our client was awarded under 6% above the agency’s expert valuation of the project, and less than the agency’s settlement offer prior to trial.
- Represented joint powers authority against landowner of a multi-unit apartment building in a part-take condemnation action. Following an 8-day trial, jury awarded only 15% of the $1.8 million in compensation sought by landowner, which was less than the agency’s final offer.
- Represented public agency in eminent domain action involving a partial taking of property entitled for multi-use development. Co-chaired a 5-week jury trial, which involved environmental

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remediation, land use entitlement, and valuation issues. The jury awarded the developer less than 30% of the damages it sought at trial, which was several million dollars less than the developer's final pretrial demand.

- Represented joint powers authority in a condemnation action against landowner and tenants of a multi-unit commercial building seeking $6.8 million in compensation (including severance damages in excess of $4 million and $1.2 million in loss of business goodwill). Following a 3-week trial, jury awarded zero goodwill and less than 30% of the real estate compensation sought by defendants. The jury's verdict nearly equaled agency's final offer and was millions below the defendants' final demand. Additionally, defeated commercial landowner's challenge to the right to take utility and temporary construction easements in a "paper" trial based on an administrative record. In that same action, successfully defeated property owner's CEQA challenge to the project.
- Defended public agency against claims by a publicly-held tester of aeronautical and military component parts to $25 million in lost goodwill resulting from the construction of a public road. As trial counsel (co-chair), successfully obtained a verdict awarding no damages for loss of goodwill after nineteen days of trial. Alan drafted all briefs and successfully argued the matter on appeal, which was upheld in its entirety as reported at 137 Cal.App.4th 264 (2006).
- Represented the City in an inverse condemnation and deprivation of civil rights action brought by property owners seeking damages in excess of $7.8 million due to the City's alleged denials of development permits. Alan successfully defeated initial attempts by the landowners to designate the matter as a complex class action suit, and thereafter obtained a judgment of dismissal by demonstrating the landowners failed to adequately and timely exhaust their administrative remedies.
- Represented joint powers authority against a developer of condemned vacant land seeking severance damages in excess of $1 million. Served as trial counsel (co-chair) in 9-day jury trial, after which the jury declined to award the developer any severance damages.

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