



Kristen S. Steinke

Partner

San Diego

501 West Broadway
Suite 1600
San Diego, CA 92101-8474

✉ ksteinke@bwslaw.com

☎ **D:** +1 619.814.5811

☎ **T:** +1 619.814.5800

PRACTICES

Eminent Domain
Environmental Land Use and
Natural Resources
Inverse Condemnation
Public Law
Real Estate and Business Law

EDUCATION

J.D., Whittier Law School, 2007
B.A., Political Science,
University of California, Santa
Barbara, 2001

ADMISSION

State Bar of California
United States District Court for
the Southern District of
California

AFFILIATIONS

San Diego County Bar
Association, Member and Chair
of Eminent Domain Section
City Attorneys Association of
San Diego County, immediate
past President

Kristen Steinke is a member of the State Bar of California and is admitted to the United States District Court for the Southern District of California. She received her J.D. from Whittier Law School and her B.A. in Political Science from the University of California, Santa Barbara.

For over 15 years, Kristen has worked with public agencies practicing public law. She began her career working with public agencies as special counsel on development projects requiring various stages of review and the use of eminent domain. Kristen currently serves as the City Attorney for the City of Lemon Grove and has occupied that position since October 2018. As City Attorney, Kristen attends all meetings of the City Council and provides legal advice to the City regarding parliamentary procedure, the Brown Act, the California Public Records Act, Conflicts of Interest, FPPC regulations, the Political Reform Act, and ever-changing State law regarding a broad range of issues.

Kristen drafts and reviews, on a regular basis, agreements for services, MOU's for development, new and updated ordinances, purchase and sale agreements, proposed development agreements, and other contracts that range in variety and legal scope. She advises the City on a broad range of issues, including housing law, membership in Joint Powers Authorities, and operation of the City's Sanitation District. Kristen advises the Sanitation District on a broad range of issues, including implications of Prop. 218 and Prop. 26 and the implementation of the Pure Water project.

In addition, Kristen regularly works with the City of Coronado as legal counsel to the Planning and Design Commission, which is tasked with the review of new development and redevelopment in the City. She works closely with planning staff and commission members on interpretation of local and state law, including zoning, environmental, implementation of development standards and unique development issues facing coastal communities.

Kristen also acts as General Counsel for the North County Fire Protection District of San Diego County. In her role as General

Counsel, Kristen attends monthly Board meetings advising on a broad array of public law issues. She is also responsible for all day-to-day legal matters that may arise for the District. Kristen previously served as Deputy City Attorney for San Marcos between January 2014 and March 2021. She has also served as special counsel to the cities of San Diego, National City, Carlsbad, and other public agencies.

Kristen began her practice as a litigator with a focus on eminent domain and continues to provide special counsel services to public agencies for issues involving eminent domain, inverse condemnation, and defense work for public agencies. Notably, she was responsible for obtaining a judgment for \$1.5 million in what began as a nuisance abatement code enforcement action against an illegal medical marijuana dispensary in the City of Lemon Grove. The entirety of the judgment was collected for the City, including attorney's fees and costs. Her practice areas include general municipal law, civil litigation, land use, planning and zoning, eminent domain, administrative law, the Brown Act, the Public Records Act, conflicts of interest, FPPC regulations, and code enforcement.

Kristen served as President of the City Attorney's Association of San Diego from March 2020 to March 2021 during which time she organized special meetings of the Association to address novel legal issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the demonstrations and riots of 2020; but, also, Kristen maintained regular meetings of the Association to address important issues facing cities in our region, like implementation of Climate Action Plans, the impact of the California Voting Rights Act, Labor and Employment matters and the application of the First Amendment on discourse at public meetings. She was the Chair of the Eminent Domain Section of the San Diego County Bar Association from 2013 to 2015 and again served as Chair between 2018 and 2020. Kristen was born and raised in San Diego and she lives in North-Inland San Diego County with her husband and two children.