

L. Elizabeth Strahlstrom

Elizabeth Strahlstrom has been a partner with Abbott & Kindermann, LLP since early 2011. Elizabeth previously practiced in Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman's Orange County office and eventually relocated to the firm's San Francisco headquarters. Elizabeth joined Steefel Leavitt & Weiss as a land use partner in 2006, the year before the firm's land use group dissolved. She then became a land use and environmental partner at Bingham McCutchen where she practiced until shortly after closure of the firm's Walnut Creek office.

Elizabeth's practice involves the full range of land use entitlements, including legislative approvals (general plan and zoning amendments, annexation, specific plans, development agreements), adjudicatory land use permits (use permits, site plan and design review, variances) and ballot box actions (initiatives/referenda). Ms. Strahlstrom regularly appears before local agency decision-making bodies and represents clients in state trial and appellate courts.

Ms. Strahlstrom is lead land use counsel for numerous big box retail and commercial projects throughout the Central Valley. In this role, she manages development teams consisting of project engineers, architects, economists, environmental consultants, and community affairs professionals, and is responsible for the timely preparation of legally adequate environmental impact reports. Ms. Strahlstrom's projects typically involve negotiations and coordination with Caltrans regarding the scope, cost and implementation of traffic-related mitigation measures. While new big box retail projects approved in California routinely face legal challenges under CEQA, four of five projects Ms. Strahlstrom handled recently are moving forward with no lawsuit filed.

Elizabeth represents clients in land use litigation that may arise out of project approvals. She worked to prepare the EIR for LAUSD's high-profile Ambassador Hotel K-12 Project and then helped defeat the three CEQA lawsuits filed to stop the project. Ms. Strahlstrom obtained County approvals for the controversial rehabilitation of a non-profit religious camp located on private property within Yosemite National Park, and successfully defended the approvals in the subsequent trial and appellate court litigation. While at Pillsbury Winthrop, Elizabeth assisted a global oil company in its statewide energy-development efforts and handled a supplemental NEPA review process for the company's LNG terminal in the Gulf of Mexico.

Ms. Strahlstrom has also represented property owners whose land was condemned for the construction of various light rail projects. She successfully challenged the size of the local harbor district's proposed condemnation of strategically important Moss Landing Power Plant property, resolving the matter by negotiation. Elizabeth remains active in efforts to develop a high-speed rail project through the Central Valley.

Ms. Strahlstrom resides in the East Bay Area of San Francisco, where she provides legal and other volunteer support to local child welfare and animal rescue organizations. Following hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Elizabeth reached out to the Marin Humane Society to help develop the flight-based animal rescue operation that saved the lives of thousands of stranded cats and dogs. Ms. Strahlstrom volunteers time working with adults with physical and mental developmental disabilities and assisting Bay Area crisis nurseries with fundraising and donation drives to help children in need.