

Craig Lawson & Co., LLC

Land Use Consultants

Who We Are

Established in 1999, Craig Lawson & Co., LLC is a land use consulting firm offering a full range of real estate project entitlement and zoning services. Based in West Los Angeles, Craig Lawson & Co., LLC draws from a professional and cohesive staff of 14 employees committed to providing quality services to the real estate development community, investors, corporate real estate owners, land use attorneys, project managers, public agencies and non-profit organizations. Over the last twenty years, Craig Lawson & Co., LLC has achieved a 99% success rate in the approval of entitlement applications for complex high-rise, mixed-use, residential, commercial, retail, industrial, institutional, non-profit, and governmental projects.

What We Do

- **Zoning Research and Land Use Analysis/Due Diligence**

Research and analysis of current zoning restrictions, land use designations, previous zoning approvals, "Q" Conditions and "D" Limitations, building permits, covenants, and affidavits.

- **Pre-Development Consulting and Feasibility Analysis**

Evaluation of the proposed project and preliminary site plan in relation to the zoning constraints and opportunities, coordination of meetings with key government officials and staff members, and preparation of project timelines, fee estimates, and entitlement strategy.

- **Land Use Entitlement Applications and Public Hearings**

Preparation and filing of applications such as: Site Plan Review, Adjustment, Modification, Zone Variance, Conditional Use Permit, Plan Approval, Zone Change, Specific Plan Exception, Plan Amendment, Density Bonus, TOC Applications, Transfer of Floor Area (TFAR), and Tract Map, including the preparation of justifications, findings and exhibits for the requested entitlements and coordination of radius maps and ownership lists, posting of notices, site photos, and PowerPoint presentations. Craig Lawson & Co., LLC provides leadership through the entire entitlement process, including negotiations with governmental officials, responding to questions from staff members, and representation at public hearings.

- **Other Land Use and Permitting Services**

Craig Lawson & Co., LLC professional services also include:

- Government and Community Relations (including lobbying)
- Conditional Use Permits for the on-site and off-site sale and service of alcoholic beverages in restaurants, bars, nightclubs and retail stores
- Project Appeals, Time Extensions, and Environmental Clearance
- Monitoring of Community Plan Updates and Specific Plan Amendments
- Responses to governmental enforcement actions (e.g. Orders to Comply)
- Supplemental Use Districts for Signage and Project Permit Compliance
- Expert Witness and Litigation Support

Craig Lawson & Co., LLC has excellent working relationships with qualified architects, environmental consultants, land use attorneys, traffic engineers, community outreach specialists, title companies, civil engineers, land surveyors, appraisers, market research analysts, and other professionals who can be recommended as members of a project team.

Craig Lawson, President, has over 40 years of experience in the public and private sectors, including 20 years at Craig Lawson & Co., LLC (“CLC”), 12 years at C.W. Cook Co., Inc., a well-known Los Angeles land use planning, civil engineering and surveying firm, and nearly 10 years as urban planning, transportation policy, and economic development advisor to former Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley. Craig served as Mayor Bradley’s liaison to the L.A. Olympic Organizing Committee (for the 1984 Olympic Games), liaison to the L.A. City Planning Commission, and alternate on the L.A. County Transportation Commission (planners of the Metro Rail subway system). Craig served on the L.A. Convention Center Authority for 13 years, and he presently serves (or has served) on the Board of Menorah Housing Foundation, Alternative Living for the Aging, the LA Headquarters Association, Jewish Federation Real Estate Cabinet, and the Southern California Real Estate Alliance. He was inducted as a member of Lambda Alpha International (honorary society for the advancement of land economics) and is a Full Member of the Urban Land Institute (ULI) where he serves on the Transit Oriented Development Product Council, the ULI LA Advisory Board and as Chair of the ULI LA Program Committee.

James D. Ries, Senior Vice President, supervises the firm’s staff in processing a wide range of entitlements for development projects. Jim has been with CLC for over 19 years, prior to which he was an urban planner at firms including: C.W. Cook Co., Inc., Malibu Bay Company, Bobrow/Thomas & Assoc., and Stanley Hoffman & Assoc. Jim’s professional achievements include securing entitlements for major multi-family residential projects (including affordable housing projects) that locate housing near jobs and transit, and obtaining local approval for numerous adaptive-reuse projects (industrial to residential) in the urban core (Arts District). Jim is former member and a past Chair of the City of Santa Monica Planning Commission, City of Los Angeles Commercial Reuse Task Force, and has served as Chairperson of the City of Santa Monica’s Sustainable City Task Force. He is also a member of the Westside Urban Forum.

Donna Shen Tripp, Vice President, has been with CLC for 7 years. She oversees a wide range of entitlement efforts including high-rise developments, affordable housing projects, hotels, medical centers/office buildings and mixed-use projects. Prior to joining CLC, Donna had over 10 years of experience with a firm that specialized in coastal and hillside approvals in Los Angeles and Ventura counties. She also worked at the U.S. Housing and Urban Development Department on affordable housing, community planning and economic development issues.

• **Notable projects**

- Various high-rise & mixed-use developments located in Downtown LA, Hollywood, Koreatown, the Fairfax District, West Los Angeles, Marina del Rey, and the San Fernando Valley.
- Numerous groundbreaking projects in Downtown Los Angeles, such as the Metropolis Mega-project (1500 condo units plus a 350 room hotel in four towers), a 393-room high rise hotel (Courtyard by Marriott/Residence Inn) across from LA Live, the 11th & Grand block (723 condo units in three towers over retail), a 700-unit residential project with downtown’s first Whole Foods Market at 8th & Grand, and the Circa high rise development (648 units in two towers) at 12th and Figueroa (part of the L.A. Sports & Entertainment District Specific Plan).
- Various key projects in the Downtown Arts District including At Mateo, AMP Lofts, Toy Factory Lofts, Biscuit Company Lofts, Barker Block, Molino Lofts, and One Santa Fe; and in Central City West including various residential and mixed-use projects for Holland Partner Group.
- Retail projects including The Grove, renovations to the Beverly Connection shopping center, and the Figueroa & 7th retail center/food court (including signage approvals).
- New and expansion projects for educational and religious institutions such as Harvard-Westlake School, Crespi Carmelite High School, Emerson College (L.A. Campus), Southwestern Law School (Master Plan), Archer School for Girls, Temple Beth Am, Temple Israel Hollywood, St. Matthews Parish School, and USC Caruso Catholic Center.
- Affordable housing and senior living projects in the S.F. Valley, East L.A., and South L.A., for non-profits including: Abode Communities, SRO Housing Corp., and Skid Row Housing Trust.