

CONTACT

rliaw@vnf.com
206.802.3842

PRACTICES

Land Use
Litigation & Investigations
Public Lands
Water

EDUCATION

University of Washington School
of Law
University of Washington, Evans
School of Public Affairs
University of Washington

BAR AND COURT ADMISSIONS

Washington State Bar
U.S. District Court for the Western
District of Washington

RAY LIAW
PARTNER



Professional Background

Ray serves as a trusted advisor on a wide range of land use and real estate matters to developers, public agencies, utilities, institutional investors, and nonprofits throughout the Pacific Northwest. She enjoys leading teams or providing strategic support at any phase of a project - during siting, due diligence, and acquisition; when securing permits and entitlements; and ensuring compliance with applicable land use approvals and regulations. Ray frequently collaborates with clients on navigating complex issues under SEPA, the Shoreline Management Act, the Growth Management Act, historic preservation laws, and a wide variety of local zoning codes and critical area regulations. When disputes cannot be resolved with regulators and project opponents, Ray provides vigorous representation in local legislative and adjudicative proceedings, state administrative tribunals, and court, including Land Use Petition Act (LUPA) appeals.

Ray also regularly advises on compliance with public procurement, the Public Records Act, and the Open Public Meetings Act. She provides guidance to both public agencies and private entities on compliance strategies with Washington's open government laws that concern controversial projects and potential litigation.

Representative Experience

- Represents developers and real estate investment companies on all aspects of due diligence and entitlement of industrial warehouse facilities throughout the Puget Sound area.
- Represents investor-owned utility on state and local entitlements and environmental review for wind energy project in Washington state.
- Advises public housing authorities on implementation of master plan developments, redevelopment proposals, and acquisition and sale of property.
- Represents market-rate and affordable housing developers on complex land use entitlements and land use disputes.
- Represents public universities and colleges on development and implementation of campus master plans and in land use litigation.
- Serves as special land use counsel to cities and special purpose districts in negotiating development agreements, administrative litigation, and LUPA appeals.
- Represents a wide variety of nonprofit organizations on due diligence, permitting, and real estate transactions concerning campus facilities.
- Advises short-term rental operators on compliance and entitlement strategies under restrictive local zoning ordinances.
- Advises Cascade Water Alliance, on asset management and municipal governance, including public procurement, real estate and land use, risk management, historic preservation, and Public Records Act compliance.
- Successful representations in state court Public Records Act litigation to prevent disclosure of trade secret records and to pursue unlawful withholding of public records.

Awards and Honors

"Best Lawyers in America" by *Best Lawyers*

Land Use and Zoning, 2020-2025

Real Estate Law, 2022-2025

"Super Lawyers" by *Washington Super Lawyers Magazine*

Rising Star, 2013-2018

Articles and Presentations

- 2018 Washington State Municipal Attorneys Association Fall Conference, 10/11/2018
- Growth Management Act Conference 2018, Law Seminars International, 08/16/2018
- A Short Course on Land Use Planning and Open Government Laws 2018-2021, 01/02/2018
- Washington State Municipal Attorneys Association Fall Conference, 10/13/2017
- Clean Water and Stormwater Conference, Law Seminars International, 06/23/2017
- A Short Course on Local Planning, City of Everett and the Planning Association of Washington, Everett WA, 04/20/2016
- Chapter 13: Growth Management Hearings Board, Washington Real Property Desk Book, Washington State Bar Association (4th ed. 2012), Vol. 5, 10/01/2012
- Women's Land Rights in Rural China: Transforming Existing Laws into a Source of Property Rights, Pacific Rim Law and Policy Journal, Vol. 17 Issue 1 pp. 237, 04/01/2008

Alerts

- Contracts 101: Knowing What You Know/Don't Know Can Make All the Difference, 04/20/2016
- Vested Rights – Now You Have Them, Now You Don't, 10/22/2015