

Daily Journal

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Development

CALIFORNIA'S **TOP 50** DEVELOPMENT LAWYERS

Editors Note

This year, we decided to take a different approach. We didn't pick a list of lawyers specifically devoted to real estate deals or municipal law. Our list this year is collection of the state's top attorneys whose work in the development arena significantly impacted projects that are helping to shape the transformation of cities.

These lawyers and the others on our list are passionate about their work, and it shows in very tangible ways.

Misty M. Sanford

FIRM

Munger, Tolles & Olson LLP
Los Angeles

SPECIALTY

real estate



Sanford has been representing the Los Angeles River Revitalization Corp. in a public/private project designed to spur development along the river.

Her client, a non-profit corporation, was created by the city of Los Angeles to help realize that goal.

The group has been working to get the last parcel of Union Pacific's Taylor Yard facility, located next to the river, into public control by negotiating with the Trammell Crow Co. and Union Pacific Railroad.

The 42-acre property is regarded as a prime access point to the river and could be connected to the Rio de Los Angeles Park — a key to the river's revitalization in this part of the city, Sanford said.

"But it has been the most difficult to acquire as it is the most heavily contaminated portion of the Taylor Yard site," she added.

Trammell Crow has been under contract with Union Pacific to develop the parcel, zoned for industrial use, pending approval of a remediation plan by the state Department of Toxic Substances Control.

"Many stakeholders want this parcel to be an access point to the river from the park

and for the community to use," Sanford said. "But there is no incentive for Union Pacific or Trammell Crow to clean up the site to a level higher than what is necessary for industrial use."

The parties have been negotiating over a three-year period, she said, "trying to figure out a way for a public/private partnership that would work for everyone."

With a half dozen possible scenarios, this kept everyone at the table while the parties explored options that might satisfy all of their various goals, Sanford said, "and get the city comfortable with what may be necessary for the remediation of the site."

During that time, Sanford did a lot of the heavy lifting, preparing the documents and term sheet, as well as bringing the city to the table.

To that end, the mayor and city council authorized city staff to negotiate a contract directly with Union Pacific and Trammell Crow to acquire the parcel with funding from Proposition O.

"They expect to close in the next couple of months," Sanford said.

— Pat Broderick