

29th Annual Land Use Conference
April 10-11, 2025 • AT&T Conference Center • Austin, TX
April 10-11, 2025 • Live Webcast

Thursday Morning, Apr. 10, 2025

Presiding Officer:

Tad Holland Cleaves, Texas Municipal League - Austin, TX

7:30 am In Austin Only	Registration Opens Includes continental breakfast.
8:20 am	Welcoming Remarks
8:30 am 0.75 hr 0.25 hr ethics	Case Law Updates, Part 1 A roundup of recent land uses cases, including platting, zoning, takings, vested rights, development agreements, etc. James L. Dougherty Jr., Attorney at Law - Houston, TX
9:15 am 0.50 hr	Legislative Update: Key Land Use Bills in the 89th Texas Legislature With the 89th Regular Legislative Session still in full swing, this session reviews pending bills and their implications for land use regulation. Tad Holland Cleaves, Texas Municipal League - Austin, TX
9:45 am 0.50 hr	Power of HOAs A review focusing on the power of owner's associations to regulate and maintain communities. Kristi Stotts, Winstead PC - Austin, TX
10:15 am	15-Minute Break
10:30 am 0.75 hr	Land Use Nonconformities: Working With Them and Around Them Whether purposeful or unforeseen, well-intentioned zoning codes create nonconformities that must be respected while cities work toward the end goal of implementing their plans. This session looks at how case law treats nonconforming rights, the takings implications, and the notice requirements of SB929. Richard G. Gertson, City of Arlington - Arlington, TX
11:15 am 0.75 hr	Regulatory Takings Update Including <i>Sheetz v. El Dorado County</i> Discussion of current state and federal case law on regulatory takings, including the US Supreme Court opinion in <i>Sheetz v. El Dorado County</i> . Arthur J. Anderson, Winstead PC - Dallas, TX Robert F. Brown, Brown & Hofmeister, L.L.P. - Richardson, TX

12:00 pm
In Austin Only

Pick up Lunch (in Austin)

Thursday Afternoon, Apr. 10, 2025

Presiding Officer:
Ed Walts, Dallas, TX

LUNCHEON PRESENTATION

12:20 pm
0.75 hr

Demographic Trends and Characteristics in Texas

A presentation on the social and economic population trends in Texas and its effects on services, infrastructure, and natural resources.

Monica Cruz, Ph.D., UTSA - Texas Demographic Center - San Antonio, TX

1:05 pm

15-Minute Break

1:20 pm
0.75 hr

How Utilities Can Intentionally or Unintentionally Influence Land Use

A panel discussion with attorneys representing utilities, developers, and municipalities addressing conditions of utility service, the regulatory framework surrounding utilities on the ground and the interplay between land development inside and outside municipal limits when utility service is at play.

Moderator:

Cody Faulk, Spencer Fane - Austin, TX

Panelists:

Geoff Kirshbaum, Terrill & Waldrop - Austin, TX

Skye Masson, City of Georgetown - Georgetown, TX

2:05 pm
0.75 hr

The Future of Water in Texas: Sustainability and Supply Challenges

An examination of the current water system landscape in Texas, including its challenges, and how Texas can plan for the future.

Rogelio Rodriguez, Water Finance Exchange (WFX) - San Antonio, TX

2:50 pm
0.75 hr

Water And Development: It Should Mix if Properly Handled!

Overview of water issues related to land development.

Adam Foster, Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts - Austin, TX

David Malish, Murfee Engineering Co., Inc. a Consor Company - Austin, TX

Edmond R. McCarthy, Jr., McCarthy & McCarthy LLP - Austin, TX

3:35 pm

10-Minute Break

3:45 pm 0.75 hr	<p>The PUC Electric Grid Resiliency Program and What It Means to Development</p> <p>An overview of the State’s recent focus on grid resiliency, the investor-owned utility electric utility resiliency programs recently approved by the Public Utility Commission of Texas, and a discussion on how these initiatives could impact development.</p> <p>Jamie Mauldin, Lloyd Gosselink Rochelle & Townsend PC - Austin, TX</p>
4:30 pm 1.00 hr 0.25 hr ethics	<p>In or Out: How Cities and Developers Navigate the ETJ</p> <p>A panel discussion on the merits of voluntary annexation, disannexation and ETJ release under current law. This panel explores from a legal and practical standpoint the decision making, tools and negotiations that allow developers and cities to get to a win-win for proposed projects outside city limits.</p> <p>Moderator: Rob Killen, Killen, Griffin & Farrimond - San Antonio, TX</p> <p>Panelists: Paul Basaldua, Versa Terra Development - San Antonio, TX Allison Bastian-Rodriguez, Denton Navarro Rodriguez Bernal Santee & Zech, P.C. - Harlingen, TX R. Scott Dixon, City of Castroville - Castroville, TX James Benjamin Griffin, Killen, Griffin & Farrimond, PLLC - San Antonio, TX</p>
5:30 pm In Austin Only	<p>Adjourn to Networking Reception</p> <p>Please join program faculty and attendees for refreshments.</p>
	<p>Thank You to Our Reception Sponsor</p> <p>WILSON CRIBBS+ GOREN</p>

Friday Morning, Apr. 11, 2025

Presiding Officer:

Melinda Ramos, City of Fort Worth - Fort Worth, TX

7:30 am	<p>Conference Room Opens</p> <p>Includes continental breakfast.</p>
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8:30 am 0.50 hr	<p>At the Intersection of the First Amendment and Land Use Law</p> <p>How to regulate solicitation in the form of an unattended donation bin. Zoning classifications versus distance buffers, and traps for the unwary regulator.</p> <p>Galen Gatten, City of Arlington - Arlington, TX</p>
9:00 am 0.75 hr	<p>Case Law Updates, Part 2</p> <p>A roundup of recent land uses cases, including platting, zoning, takings, vested rights, development agreements, etc.</p> <p>James L. Dougherty Jr., Attorney at Law - Houston, TX</p>
9:45 am 0.50 hr	<p>Hot Topics in Texas Land Use Law</p> <p>A wide-ranging discussion of current issues: A Dallas response to gentrification and NIMBY-ism—will it work? Does the concept “gentle density” really increase housing stock? Why have so many parking spaces disappeared in Texas cities? And our perennial topic: how are Texas courts now addressing municipal regulation of short-term rentals, and have we learned anything new? These topics and more are addressed in this presentation.</p> <p>Terrence S. Welch, Brown & Hofmeister, L.L.P. - Richardson, TX</p>
10:15 am	<p>15-Minute Break</p>
10:30 am 0.75 hr	<p>Park Your Good Ideas: Revamping Urban Spaces for Smarter Parking</p> <p>How can cities, regions, and states plan and invest in transportation systems and regulate or deregulate land use in ways that give people more freedom to afford various lifestyle options?</p> <p>Moderator: Tyler Wallach, Jackson Walker - Fort Worth, TX</p> <p>Panelists: Jay Blazek Crossley, Farm&City - Austin, TX Matthew Goebel, Clarion Associates - Denver, CO Ann Zadeh, AICP, Community Design Ft. Worth - Ft. Worth, TX</p>
11:15 am 1.00 hr ethics	<p>Who Can I Complain To?</p> <p>Dealing with represented governmental entities, unrepresented governmental entities, and how to tell the difference.</p> <p>Frank Javier Garza, Davidson, Troilo, Ream & Garza, P.C. - San Antonio, TX Charles E. Zech, Denton, Navarro, Rodriguez, Bernal, Santee & Zech, P.C. - Austin, TX</p>
12:15 pm In Austin Only	<p>Pick Up Lunch (In Austin)</p> <p>Included in registration.</p>

Friday Afternoon, Apr. 11, 2025

Presiding Officer:

Barbara A. Boulware-Wells, The Knight Law Firm, LLP - Austin, TX

LUNCHEON PRESENTATION

12:35 pm 1.00 hr ethics	<p>Thrive Together: Cultivating Wellness for You and Your Legal Team</p> <p>Explore the essential role of burnout prevention in the legal profession and discover practical strategies to cultivate wellness for yourself and your staff. This session equips you with actionable tools for fostering a thriving, resilient legal team.</p> <p>Alicia Freeman, Texas Lawyers' Assistance Program (TLAP) - Austin, TX Kiele Linroth Pace, Pacefirm Consulting, LLC - Austin, TX</p>
1:35 pm	15-Minute Break
1:50 pm 0.75 hr	<p>Participation in Developer Construction Contracts</p> <p>Chapter 212, subchapter C of the Local Government Code establishes the traditional method for municipalities to financially participate in developer construction contracts. However, there are other alternative methods for municipalities to participate in developer contracts through compliance with chapter 252 of the Local Government Code or chapter 2269 of the Government Code which will be discussed.</p> <p>Larry Collister, City of Ft. Worth City Attorney's Office - Fort Worth, TX</p>
2:35 pm 0.50 hr	<p>Eyes in the Sky, Feet on the Ground: A Municipal Framework for Emerging Drone Technologies</p> <p>As drone technology rapidly evolves, cities face unprecedented challenges in balancing innovation with public safety, privacy rights and existing land use frameworks. This presentation examines a detailed case study of drone operations in urban environments, analyzing how municipalities can develop adaptive regulatory approaches that accommodate beneficial drone uses while protecting community interests. Through examining real-world examples of commercial drone applications, from delivery services to building inspections, this presentation explores practical strategies for creating flexible yet robust land use policies that can serve as a model for addressing future technological disruptions.</p> <p>Emily Bowlin, Gray Reed - Dallas, TX</p>
3:05 pm	10-Minute Break
3:15 pm 0.50 hr	<p>Platting and Infrastructure During Periods of Exponential Growth</p> <p>The population growth in Texas has led to increased demands on local governments to review and approve development projects. Streamlining processes and adopting new regulations for plats and infrastructure construction by developers can provide local governments with new methods for responding to these increased demands.</p> <p>Richard "Rich" McCracken, City Attorney's Office, City of - Fort Worth, TX</p>
3:45 pm 0.75 hr 0.50 hr ethics	<p>Legislative Immunity</p> <p>Legislative immunity and protection of P&Z Commissioners and City Council-members from forced testimony.</p> <p>Bradford E. Bullock, Messer Fort - Austin, TX</p>
4:30 pm	Adjourn