

# 2012 - Year in Review

2012 was another busy and successful year for Armbruster Goldsmith & Delvac (AGD) and our clients. We have appreciated the opportunity to represent our clients on so many interesting and challenging projects, including some of the most prominent projects in the state, including the Farmers Field Football Stadium Project, USC Development Plan, and Century Plaza mixed-use project. We continued to achieve notable successes in both our administrative land use practice and our land use litigation practice.

We are pleased to share with you some of the highlights of our efforts on behalf of our clients during 2012:

## **SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT**

After a 17 year absence, NFL football is on its way to return to Los Angeles. We helped Anschutz Entertainment Group (AEG) obtain approval of its plan to build Farmers Field and modernize the LA Convention Center - all privately funded. This was the culmination of 18 months of work by AGD on a wide range of land use efforts. In April, the City of Los Angeles released the Draft EIR for the Project. At 10,000 pages, Tim Leiweke of AEG called it the most comprehensive EIR ever. The City released the Final EIR in August.

As a result of CEQA legislation that AGD assisted AEG with in 2011, the project includes a carbon neutrality program and a trip reduction program that calls for Farmers Field to be "Best in the NFL" at non-auto use by spectators. AGD worked with leading environmental groups to develop these novel programs. The legislation also called for mediation with concerned parties. AGD represented AEG in scores of mediation sessions with over a dozen organizations which resolved the vast majority of concerns and issues before the City held its first public hearing. In September, the Los Angeles City Planning Commission and City Council unanimously approved the EIR and entitlements, including a Specific Plan, a Sign District Ordinance and a Development Agreement, for Farmers Field stadium.

AGD is also representing Goldenvoice, LLC in seeking long-term entitlements from the City of Indio for the world-renowned Coachella and Stagecoach Festivals.

## **HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

The City of Los Angeles approved various entitlements for the Century Plaza Project in September. The Project includes two 46-story condominium towers with 290 condominium units and over 100,000 sf of retail/restaurant space, and preserves the iconic Century Plaza Hotel. AGD had worked with national, state and local preservation organizations to reach an agreement that resulted in support for the project from a broad preservation coalition.

In October, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences announced that it would develop the Museum of Motion Pictures at the historic May Company Building at Wilshire and Fairfax. This project will involve both renovation of the historic building and new construction at the rear designed by internationally recognized architect, Renzo Piano.

AGD has initiated the process with the City of Santa Monica regarding preservation issues with the Central Tower Building and a potential Development Agreement to allow residential development on the balance of the Property. The result would be a mixed-use development a block and a half from the terminus station of the Expo Line that is now under construction.

## **EDUCATION**

The Los Angeles City Council unanimously approved a Specific Plan and Development Agreement for USC's 5,000,000 square-foot University Park Development Plan in December. AGD assisted in all aspects, including negotiating the Specific Plan and Development Agreement and ensuring CEQA compliance.

The City of Los Angeles granted approval for two academic buildings totaling over 150,000 square feet on USC's University Park Campus in February.

The City of Culver City granted approvals for Willows School's increased enrollment and campus size expansion over a 15-year Master Plan in October.

## **MIXED USE**

M. David Paul Development, LLC's 399-unit, mixed-use development in Sherman Oaks received endorsement from the Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council in July.

## **MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL**

Fifield Companies received approvals from both the City of Los Angeles and the City of Santa Monica for several multi-residential projects in and near downtown Los Angeles and Santa Monica throughout 2012.

Alliance Residential received approvals for multi-residential projects in Santa Monica and Hollywood in January and May, respectively.

Overall, AGD is currently assisting clients with the entitlement process on over 40 multi-family residential projects.

### **COASTAL**

In July, the California Coastal Commission rejected an appeal against a coastal development permit (CDP) for Legacy Partner's Neptune Project in Marina del Rey. The Commission had previously approved Local Coastal Plan amendments for this project, which includes 526 apartments, a new marina and a restored wetland park. The Commission rejected an appeal of the CDP for the wetland park in December.

### **RETAIL**

In August, the Los Angeles Central Area Planning Commission approved Target's 170,000 square-foot big box/retail project in Hollywood. The Los Angeles City Council denied an appeal and approved the project in November.

### **MEDICAL**

The City of Los Angeles approved a 103,000 square-foot medical building on the USC Health Science Campus in July.

The City of Moorpark approved an approximate 80,000 square-foot medical office building in November.

The City of Los Angeles approved in December an approximate 112,000 square-foot medical office building in Tarzana, including zone changes and Specific Plan exceptions.

### **ENERGY**

Imperial County approved entitlements for the development of 8minutenergy's 600 MW photovoltaic solar farm in April and a 275 MW photovoltaic solar farm in August.

### **INDUSTRIAL**

The City of Los Angeles approved in December a conditional use permit for the sale of alcohol for on-site and off-site consumption in connection with the development of a microbrewery by A&S Brewing, a subsidiary of Boston Beer, in the Arts District.

## **LITIGATION**

Our litigators successfully defended a CEQA and due process challenge to the revised La Brea Gateway Project. AGD previously settled two other lawsuits challenging the original La Brea Gateway approvals.

In October, AGD favorably settled litigation challenging SB 292 and a potential CEQA challenge by community groups against Farmer's Field, paving the way for AEG to seek an NFL team.

AGD favorably settled a potential CEQA challenge by community groups against the USC Development Plan in December.

AGD favorably settled litigation challenging the Grandmarc student housing project in February.

## **REDEVELOPMENT**

In November, AGD successfully negotiated a Disposition and Development Agreement between the City of Tustin and the Irvine Company for the purchase of former Marine Corps air base land. AGD continues to represent Tustin in connection with the disposition and development of the former air base.

## **HONORS AND OTHER FIRM NEWS**

Bill Delvac was named one of the top real estate attorneys in California by The Daily Journal in August.

Our former colleague Dave Rand rejoined the firm in May after a successful stint at a public interest advocacy organization.

*We look forward to a successful 2013 and wish you a prosperous year as well.*