

**Group Homes – Residential Recovery Facilities Conference**  
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# **Residential Recovery Homes and Their Local Impacts**

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## 1. OVERVIEW OF PRESENTATION

### A. Summary.

This presentation:

1. Provides an overview of federal, state, and local laws governing “group homes,” particularly residential recovery homes;
2. Discusses characteristics of residential neighborhoods and the significant impacts on these communities caused by the overconcentration of “group homes”; and
3. Suggests a number of regulatory solutions for cities and counties to consider in addressing these impacts and regulating group homes.

### B. Concept of “Group Home”.

1. The definition of “group home” varies widely, depending on the regulations of each local agency. Thus, a city or county may consider the characteristics of its own community in defining “group home.”
2. For example, the *City of Dana Point* defines “group home” as “any residential care facility for six or fewer persons which is licensed by the State.” (Dana Point Municipal Code, § 9.75.270.)
3. The *City of Riverside* defines “group housing” as “any living situation ... that accommodates more than six unrelated individuals....” (Riverside Municipal Code, § 19.04.162.)
4. For purposes of this presentation, “group home” means any living situation accommodating 3 or more unrelated individuals, including licensed and unlicensed residential care facilities.

2. **REGULATORY SCHEME: FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL FRAMEWORK.**

A. **Federal Law: Non-Discrimination Against People with Disabilities.**

1. Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988.

- a. In 1988, Congress passed the Fair Housing Amendments Act (“FHAA”; 42 USC § 3601 *et seq.*) to prohibit discrimination against people with disabilities in public and private housing. (42 USC § 3604.)
- b. A plaintiff may establish a discrimination claim under the FHAA under a theory of disparate treatment, disparate impact, or a failure to make a reasonable accommodation. (*Gamble v. City of Escondido* (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1996) 104 F.3d 300, 304-305.)
- c. Disparate Treatment. To bring a disparate treatment claim, a plaintiff must first establish a prima facie case showing that: (1) the plaintiff is a member of a protected class; (2) the plaintiff applied for a permit or other approval and was qualified to receive it; (3) the permit was denied despite the plaintiff being qualified; and (4) the defendant approved permits for similarly situated parties during a period relatively near the time the plaintiff’s request was denied. If the plaintiff establishes a prima facie case, the burden shifts to the defendant to articulate a legitimate, nondiscriminatory reason for the action. If the defendant satisfies the burden, the plaintiff must prove by a preponderance of the evidence that the defendant’s reason is a mere pretext. Proof of discriminatory motive is crucial to a disparate treatment claim. (*Gamble, supra*, 104 F.3d at 305.)
- d. Disparate Impact. To establish a prima facie disparate impact claim, a plaintiff must establish at least that the defendant’s actions had a discriminatory effect by showing the following: (1) occurrence of certain outwardly neutral practices; and (2) significantly adverse or disproportionate impact on persons of a particular type produced by facially neutral acts or practices. (*Gamble, supra*, 104 F.3d at 306.)
- e. Reasonable Accommodations. A municipality may commit discrimination if it refuses to “make reasonable accommodations in rules, policies, practices, or services, when such accommodations may be necessary to afford [the physically disabled] equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling.” (*Gamble, supra*, 104 F.3d at 307; citing 42 USC 3604(f)(3)(B).)

**B. State Law: Operating License Requirements.**

1. Numerous types of “group homes” are required to obtain a license to operate from the applicable state agency. These include:
  - a. Intermediate Care Facilities for the Developmentally Disabled (Health & Safety Code §§ 1265 *et seq.*)
  - b. Community Care Facilities (Health & Safety Code §§ 1500 *et seq.*)
  - c. Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly (Health & Safety Code §§ 1569 *et seq.*)
  - d. Residential Care Facilities for Persons with Chronic, Life-Threatening Illness (Health & Safety Code §§ 1568.01 *et seq.*)
  - e. Pediatric Day Health and Respite Care Facilities (Health & Safety Code §§ 1760 *et seq.*)
  - f. Child Day Care Facilities (Health & Safety Code §§ 1596.70 *et seq.*)
  - g. Alcoholism or Drug Abuse Recovery or Treatment Facilities<sup>1</sup> (Health & Safety Code §§ 11834.01 *et seq.*)
  
2. Unlicensed Facilities.
  - a. Sober Living Homes. These are transitional living arrangements, which do not and can not provide any recovery, treatment or detoxification services to those recovering from alcohol or drug abuse. Sober living homes are not subject to any state licensing regulations and may be regulated by local agencies consistent with the federal Fair Housing laws.
  - b. Parolee Homes. Parolee homes are not subject to state licensing requirements but are regulated by a number of cities. For example, the *City of Fontana* defines “parolee home” as “any residential structure or unit ... which houses between two to six parolees....” (Fontana Municipal Code, § 30-6.) Parolee homes in Fontana require approval of a conditional use permit and are subject to the City’s location requirements. (Fontana Municipal Code, § 30-155, 30-30-158.)

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<sup>1</sup> An “alcoholism or drug abuse recovery or treatment facility” is defined as “any premises, place, or building that provides 24-hour residential nonmedical services to adults who are recovering from problems related to alcohol, drug ... misuse or abuse, and who need ... recovery treatment or detoxification services.” (Health & Safety Code § 11834.02(a)). In contrast, a “sober living facility” does not provide recovery, treatment or detoxification services.

**C. Increase in Number of Drug Treatment Facilities Driven by Proposition 36.**

1. California voters passed the Substance Abuse and Crime Prevention Act in 2000 (“Proposition 36”).
2. The purpose of Proposition 36 was to “divert from incarceration into community-based substance abuse treatment programs non-violent defendants, probationers and parolees charged with simple drug possession or drug use offenses” and “to halt the wasteful expenditure of hundreds of millions of dollars each year on the incarceration – and re-incarceration – of non-violent drug users who would be better served by community-based treatment.” (Proposition 36, § 3.)
3. Proposition 36 changed state law to require participation in drug treatment programs instead of incarceration for specified first time and repeat non-violent drug possession offenders. (Penal Code, § 1210.1.)
4. Since Proposition 36 was passed in 2000, California has experienced a larger increase in drug treatment clients than the rest of the country. The number of substance abuse treatment clients in California increased from 104,657 in the year 2000 to 140,401 in 2004 – a 34.1% increase.
5. In 2000, there were 1,061 drug treatment programs in California, including 663 licensed residential facilities and 398 certified outpatient programs. Three years after Proposition 36 was passed, there were 1,766 programs: 842 licensed residential facilities and 924 certified outpatient programs.
6. In three years, the number of treatment sites increased by 66% in three years, and the number of licensed residential facilities rose by 27%. These figures do not take into account unlicensed and uncertified facilities.<sup>2</sup>

**D. Local Land Use and Zoning Regulations Governing Group Homes.**

1. Local Requirements. In addition to state licensing requirements, many cities and counties require “group homes” to obtain a local land use permit, depending on the size, type and zoning of the group home.
2. Examples of Local Zoning Requirements.
  - a. **Newport Beach.** The City of Newport Beach allows residential care facilities for 6 or fewer persons, including sober living homes, in all residential zones without a use permit. Newport Beach requires a special Federal Exception Permit for residential care facilities of 7 or more persons. (Newport Beach Municipal Code, § 20.91.020.)

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<sup>2</sup> Ehlers, Scott and Ziedenber, Jason. *Proposition 36: Five Years Later*, Justice Policy Institute (April, 2006).

- b. **Costa Mesa.** The City of Costa Mesa allows residential care facilities of 6 or fewer persons in all residential zones without a use permit, and allows residential care facilities of 7 or more persons in certain residential zones with a conditional use permit. (Costa Mesa Municipal Code, § 13-30.)
- c. **Dana Point.** The City of Dana Point allows all state-licensed group homes for six or fewer persons in all residential zones without a use permit. Certain residential facilities are allowed in residential zones, but only with a conditional use permit. (Dana Point Municipal Code, § 9.09.020.)
- d. **Riverside.** The City of Riverside requires all group housing facilities (7 or more) to obtain a conditional use permit at a public hearing subject to the City’s development standards, including over-concentration restrictions. (Riverside Municipal Code, § 19.64(S).)

3. **LOCAL IMPACTS OF GROUP HOMES IN CALIFORNIA CITIES.**

A. **Residential Neighborhood Characteristics**

- 1. Established residential communities – *place where most people spend a significant amount of time, and the base for social and economic interactions.*
  - a. Newport Beach defines a “single housekeeping unit” as “the functional equivalent of a traditional family, whose members are an interactive group of persons jointly occupying a single dwelling unit, under no more than one written or oral rental agreement, including the joint use of common areas and sharing household activities and responsibilities such as meals, chores and expenses.” (NBMC, § 20.03.030.) The City does not classify residential care facilities for 7 or more persons as single housekeeping units, but does consider residential care facilities for 6 or fewer persons to be a single housekeeping unit.
- 2. Residential Diversity. Diversity in type of residences (single family home, multi-family, senior housing, etc...).
- 3. Community Linkages. Linkages to the community, including work, school, and places of worship.
- 4. Stability. Expectations of permanence and stability.
- 5. Homeownership. Frequently, the home is the family’s most significant economic asset and a significant consumer of discretionary income. Home marketability and values can depend in part on the condition of the housing stock, land uses on adjacent property, and proximity to other desirable land uses (e.g., schools, shopping, etc...).
- 6. California Supreme Court Statement on Residential Characteristics. The California Supreme Court has stated, “[W]e think it may be safely and sensibly said that justification for residential zoning may, in the last

analysis, be rested upon the protection of the civic and social values of the American home. The establishment of such districts is for the general welfare because it tends to promote and perpetuate the American home....The home and its intrinsic influences are the very foundation of good citizenship, and any factor contributing to the establishment of homes and the fostering of home life doubtless tends to the enhancement not only of community life but of the life of the nation as a whole.” (*Miller v. Board of Public Works* (1925) 195 Cal. 477, 493; *see also Ewing v. City of Carmel-by-the-Sea* (1991) 234 Cal.App.3d 1579, 1590.)

7. Policies Favoring Homeownership. With homeownership comes “stability, increased interest in the promotion of ... schools and churches, and ‘*recognition of the individual's responsibility for his share in the safeguarding of the welfare of the community* and increased pride in personal achievement which must come from personal participation in projects looking toward community betterment.’” (*Ewing*, supra, 234 Cal.App.3d 1579, 1590, citations omitted, emphasis added.)

**B. Impacts Adversely Affecting Residential Character of Neighborhoods.**

1. Over-concentration. Impacts are primarily caused by the over-concentration of group homes in residential zones to the point that the character of the neighborhood is transformed into a “group home” neighborhood with residents within it.
2. Incompatibility. The over-concentration of group homes in residential zones conflicts with the purpose of traditional, established neighborhoods – permanence, stability, and linkages to the community.
3. Transiency. Group homes, particularly residential care facilities, tend to house occupants that are transient in nature, whereas a family residing in a traditional home may reside there for decades.
4. Linkages to Community. The transient nature of residents of group homes limits their linkages and bonds with the community, thus minimizing the “sense of community” in a particular neighborhood.
5. Type of Housing Does Not Necessarily Accommodate the Use. Group homes promote dormitory style living that is not necessarily accommodated by the design of the existing housing stock.
  - a. In some cases, 6 occupants of a group home may reside in each unit of a duplex, with the entire duplex consisting of 12 occupants, not including staff.
6. Property Marketability and Values. If the neighborhood is viewed as less desirable for permanent residence because of the over-concentration of group homes, residential property values may decline.
7. Externalities. See next section; examples of adverse impacts of group homes.

C. **Examples of Adverse Impacts and Local Responses.**

1. **Newport Beach.**

- a. Initiation of Amendments to Ordinance. The City of Newport Beach has engaged in minimal regulation of group homes for handicapped individuals, finding that its ability to regulate such uses is circumscribed by federal and state laws. In response to the significant over-concentration of group homes in the City, the City Council adopted a resolution on February 13, 2007, initiating amendments to its regulations governing residential care facilities.
- b. Over-concentration. The Balboa Peninsula is estimated to contain over 100 residential care facilities, including alcoholism or drug abuse recovery or treatment facilities and sober living facilities. In some parts of the Peninsula, especially between 30th and 45th Streets, the total number of beds in residential care facilities is estimated to exceed 30% of the total population of the area.
- c. Established Communities. In Newport Beach, the Balboa Peninsula and Newport Heights are not master planned communities. With less than 3 feet between buildings in some more established residential communities in Newport Beach, increases in density cause a significantly greater impact. Noise, smoke, parking and loitering especially burden these established communities.
- d. Increased Density and Over-crowding. While many residential care facilities serve a maximum of six occupants, this figure does not include staff, caretakers, management and other persons residing or working at those facilities. Residential care facilities typically house more persons than a more traditionally occupied residential unit.
- e. Increased Traffic. Increased density may result in increased traffic from the higher number of occupants of each facility, the higher demand for services generated by those occupants, and from staff and caretakers.
- f. Limited Parking. With increased density and traffic, facilities may strain already limited on-street parking resources in the Balboa Peninsula and other areas. Parking is particularly overburdened with weekend visitors, especially in the older coastal communities, like the Balboa Peninsula. Group homes that have little parking can be changed to other uses and be under-parked.
- g. Smoking. Observations of increased smoking in residential areas; effects of second hand smoke; litter caused by ash and cigarette butts.
- h. Loitering. Increase in amount of noise, loitering, and littering outside residential homes. Activities may be moved outdoors because traditional residential units are not designed for dormitory

style living.

- i. Safety. Increased risk of crime in residential areas is a concern when parolees are residing in sober living homes, as well as because of the proximity of these homes to schools and child care facilities.
- j. Deliveries. Increase in number of commercial or other types of delivery trucks and vehicles, and increase in number of trucks and vans transporting occupants of residential care facilities to other facilities.

2. **West Covina.**

- a. The City of West Covina adopted an ordinance in November 2006 affecting group houses in response to resident concerns over a group home in the Loma Vista neighborhood.
- b. According to a report filed by the Chief of Police, a group home serving troubled adolescents between 9 to 18 years of age triggered 13 calls to the Police Department over a 2 month period in 2005. Calls ranged from vandalism and disturbances to attempts to steal vehicles.

3. **Pasadena.**

- a. The City of Pasadena initiated an ordinance to regulate group homes in Summer 2006.
- b. The City had received numerous complaints regarding the incompatibility and impacts of various kinds of group homes in residential zones.
- c. The City's Planning Commission considered a new ordinance regulating group homes on February 14, 2006.

4. **Murrieta.**

- a. The City of Murrieta enacted a temporary moratorium on group homes in 2005 in response to complaints about unlicensed sober living facilities in residential neighborhoods.
- b. Residents complained to the City Council about sober living homes operating without a license.
- c. City code enforcement officers had cited a sober living home for having two more residents than allowed by law without a license.

4. **FEDERAL CASES UPHOLDING THE REGULATION OF GROUP HOMES AT THE STATE AND LOCAL LEVEL.**

A. **Oxford House v. City of St. Louis (8th Cir. 1996) 77 F.3d 249**

1. City of St. Louis' zoning ordinance limited group homes to a maximum of eight handicapped residents.
2. The Court concluded that St. Louis' eight-person rule was rational based on its legitimate interest in decreasing congestion, traffic, and noise in residential areas.
3. The Court found that Congress did not intend the Fair Housing Act to "remove handicapped people from the 'normal and usual incidents of citizenship, such as participation in the public components of zoning decisions, to the extent that participation is required of all citizens whether or not they are handicapped.'"

B. **Gamble v. City of Escondido (9th Cir. 1997) 104 F.3d 300**

1. Life Care Residences sought to construct a complex for physically disabled elderly adults in a single-family residence in Escondido. The proposed building was 10,360 square feet with eight bedrooms and twelve bathrooms. The upper portion was designed to house 15 elderly disabled adults with the lower portion serving as an adult day care facility. A ten-car parking lot was proposed.
2. The City denied the conditional use permit application because the proposed building was too large for the lot and did not conform in size and bulk with neighborhood structures.
3. The Court concluded that the City's concern for the character of the neighborhood was legitimate and nondiscriminatory.

C. **Familystyle of St. Paul, Inc. v. City of St. Paul (8th Cir. 1991) 923 F.2d 91**

1. The State of Minnesota advanced the deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill by requiring new group homes to be located at least a quarter mile from an existing residential program.
2. The Court upheld both the State's and City's group home dispersal requirements finding that they were designed to "ensure that mentally handicapped persons needing residential treatment will not be forced into enclaves of treatment facilities that would replicate and thus perpetuate the isolation resulting from institutionalization."
3. The Court added, "the quarter-mile spacing requirement guarantees that residential treatment facilities will, in fact, be 'in the community,' rather than in neighborhoods made up of group homes that re-create an institutional environment setting."

**D. Bryant Woods Inn, Incorporated v. Howard County, Maryland (4th Cir. 1997) 124 F.3d 597**

1. An owner of a group home for the disabled or elderly residents sought a variance to expand the size of an existing home from 8 to 15 residents.
2. Neighbors were concerned about parking and congestion, and that expansion might result in overflow parking onto a residential street. Neighbors were concerned that 15 residents would be too intense for the particular lot.
3. The County denied the request for the variance.
4. The Court found that nothing in the record suggested that a group home of 15 residents, as opposed to 8, is necessary to provide a “reasonable accommodation” to individuals with handicaps.

**5. POTENTIAL FOR REGULATORY SOLUTIONS.**

**A. Certification.**

1. The County of Orange maintains a certification program for sober living facilities (those that do not provide treatment or recovery services). Only certified sober living facilities are given referrals by County departments.
2. The process requires each facility to submit its policies and procedures, including smoking and prescription drug policies. The process requires all staff to be subject to a background check by the Orange County Sheriff’s Department.
3. All prospective residents must complete forms listing past crimes.
4. The County also requires certified facilities to implement and enforce a good neighbor policy.

**B. Local Regulation.**

1. The State is unable to take account of local zoning concerns and particular community characteristics.
2. Cities and counties are best equipped to engage in planning and zoning for their planned and more established communities. Cities and counties can and must regulate structures regardless of their current use.

**3. State Licensed Facilities.**

- a. Use Permit. Requiring a use permit for all licensed facilities of 7 or more residents, and licensed facilities of 6 or fewer residents if operated in close proximity to each other.

- (1) The City of Costa Mesa allows residential care facilities of 7 or more persons in certain residential zones only with a conditional use permit. (Costa Mesa Municipal Code, § 13-

30.)

- (2) California law does not prohibit requiring a use permit for facilities of 7 or more persons (e.g., Health & Safety Code, §11834.23).
- (3) Federal law does not prohibit requiring a use permit for a group home for handicapped individuals so long as the city or county does not treat handicapped individuals differently from non-handicapped individuals. An ordinance must be carefully crafted given potential discrimination claims under the federal Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988 (“FHAA”; 42 USC § 3601) under theories of disparate treatment or disparate impact. Additionally, a local municipality may violate the FHAA by refusing to make reasonable accommodations for handicapped persons. (*Gamble v. City of Escondido* (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1996) 104 F.3d 300, 304-305.)

b. Over-concentration. Limit concentration of group homes in residential neighborhoods by requiring minimum distance between all group homes, whether licensed or unlicensed.

- (1) In *Familystyle of St. Paul, Inc. v. City of St. Paul* (8<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1991) 923 F.2d 91, the Court upheld group home dispersal requirements between homes for the mentally ill finding that “the quarter-mile spacing requirement guarantees that residential treatment facilities will, in fact, be ‘in the community,’ rather than in neighborhoods made up of group homes that re-create an institutional environment setting.”
- (2) To avoid the over-concentration of group housing facilities, the City of Riverside requires a 300-foot separation between any two different or same type of group housing, transitional shelter, permanent emergency shelter, or drop-in center. Riverside requires a 1000-foot separation where any of the uses is a parolee/probationer home. (Riverside Municipal Code, §19.64.040(S).)

c. 6 or Fewer Loophole. Define the number of residents by the entire premises, site, building, or group of buildings that collectively provide services; not by a single building where separate buildings are integrated.

- (1) On February 13, 2007, the City of Newport Beach initiated amendments to its Zoning Code (Resolution 2007-10) that would revise its land use classifications for “Residential Care, Limited” (6 or fewer) and “Residential Care, General” (7 or more occupants). The proposed amendments would state that the number of occupants relates to the entire premises, site, or building, and not any single building. Thus, the number of occupants in multiple buildings would be considered collectively where those

buildings are either owned by the same entity, or operated in furtherance of a single plan or goal.

- (2) The regulations implementing the state law on alcoholism or drug abuse recovery or treatment facilities define “facility” as “any facility, building, or group of buildings....” (9 CCR, § 10501(a)(27).)
- (3) Under state law, a single license may be obtained for “a facility wherein separate buildings or portions of a residential facility are integral components of a single alcoholism or drug abuse recovery or treatment facility and all of the components of the facility are managed by the same licensee.” (Health & Safety Code, § 11834.09.)

4. **Unlicensed Facilities, including Sober Living Homes.**

a. Use Permit. Requiring a use permit for all unlicensed facilities, regardless of the number of occupants.

- (1) The City of Dana Point defines “group home” as “any residential care facility for six or fewer persons which is licensed by the State.” (Dana Point Municipal Code, §9.75.270.) While licensed group homes do not require a conditional use permit, unlicensed facilities are either prohibited from certain residential districts or require a conditional use permit. (Dana Point Municipal Code, §9.09.020.)
- (2) The City of Irvine allows sober living facilities only in its Lifelong Learning District and requires a conditional use permit. (Irvine Municipal Code, § 3-37-39.8.1.)
- (3) Federal law does not prohibit requiring a conditional use permit for a group home for handicapped individuals so long as the city or county does not treat handicapped individuals differently from non-handicapped individuals. An ordinance must be carefully crafted given potential discrimination claims under the federal Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988 (“FHAA”; 42 USC § 3601) under theories of disparate treatment or disparate impact. Additionally, a local municipality may violate the FHAA by refusing to make reasonable accommodations for handicapped persons. (*Gamble v. City of Escondido* (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1996) 104 F.3d 300, 304-305.)

b. Definition of “Boarding House”.

- (1) Regulate unlicensed facilities through local legislation affecting “boarding houses.”

- (2) State law prohibits cities and counties from including licensed alcoholism or drug abuse recovery or treatment facilities serving six or fewer persons within their definition of “boarding house.” (Health & Safety Code, § 11834.23.)
  - (3) Include unlicensed facilities within local definition of “boarding housing” subject to “reasonable accommodation” requirements of FHAA.
  - (4) Such regulation could apply to all who rent rooms without regard as to who is renting the room and without differential treatment based on a person’s status.
  - (5) The City of Orange defines “boarding house” as “a residence or dwelling, other than a hotel, wherein three or more rooms are rented under three or more separate written or oral rental agreements, leases or subleases or combination thereof, whether or not the owner, agent or rental manager resides within the residence.” (City of Orange Municipal Code, § 17.04.021.)
  - (6) California Attorney General concluded that cities may prohibit, limit or regulate the operation of a boarding house in a low density residential zone in order to preserve the residential character of the neighborhood. Preserving the residential character of a neighborhood is a legitimate government purpose that may be reasonably achieved by prohibiting commercial enterprises such as boarding house businesses. (86 Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen 30 (Mar. 19, 2003).)
- c. Over-concentration. Limit concentration of group homes, in residential neighborhoods, including unlicensed facilities, by requiring minimum distance between all facilities, whether licensed or unlicensed. (*Familystyle of St. Paul, Inc. v. City of St. Paul* (8<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1991) 923 F.2d 91.)

## 6. SUMMARY.

**Numerous residential communities throughout California have been significantly impacted by the over-concentration of all types of “group homes.” Despite a complex federal and state regulatory framework, cities and counties do have the authority to regulate the number and location of group homes so long as they do not discriminate against people with disabilities.**

**Alene M. Taber, Esq., AICP**, concentrates her practice in assisting clients with administrative law issues such as, compliance with air quality regulations and California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”), and obtaining land use entitlements before local planning agencies. Ms. Taber also has experience litigating entitlement rights, CEQA and other environmental issues, imposition of fees, and constitutional rights cases and is currently co-counsel in air quality/CEQA litigation related to the Salton Sea (QSA Coordinated Proceedings). Prior to joining Jackson, DeMarco, Tidus & Peckenpaugh, Ms. Taber worked for the South Coast Air Quality Management District (“SCAQMD”) for 12 ½ years and was responsible for managing the permitting and enforcement of facilities in the region. Ms. Taber was a contributing author to SCAQMD’s “CEQA Air Quality Handbook” and “Making Clean Air a Priority: A Guide for Planners in Local Government.” Ms. Taber was also a previous city planner with the Southern California Association of Governments (“SCAG”) where she worked on transportation and air quality issues and the City of Carson where she processed land use entitlements and subdivision maps, drafted CEQA documents, and wrote several ordinances.

**Michael J. Alti, Esq.**, concentrates his practice in environmental law, land use, and water rights. Mr. Alti assists private landowners and developers in obtaining project entitlements before cities and counties. Mr. Alti’s environmental and land use practice involves compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act, Subdivision Map Act, Williamson Act, local planning and zoning laws, and other state and federal environmental and land use laws. Mr. Alti is also a contributing author to the California Land Use and Water Law and Policy Reporters. Mr. Alti received his J.D. from the UCLA School of Law in 2001, where he served as Chief Production Editor and Webmaster for the Journal of International Law and Foreign Affairs. While at UCLA, Mr. Alti clerked in the Legal Department at the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. Mr. Alti also has experience in eminent domain, local agency formation, public contracts, and legislative analysis.

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