



## Courtney P. Willits

ATTORNEY, ELROD FRIEDMAN LLP

CHICAGO

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### Overview

### About Courtney Willits

**Courtney Willits** focuses her practice on municipal law, land use and zoning, and economic development. She counsels local governments on a broad array of issues including governance, compliance with the Illinois Freedom of Information Act, the Law Enforcement Officer-Worn Body Camera Act, Illinois Open Meetings Act, and Illinois State Officials and Employees Ethics Act, as well as numerous other non-home rule and home rule authorities. Courtney has experience drafting legislation and policy, zoning and other development approvals, as well as preparing and negotiating various contracts such as procurement of products and services, real estate purchase and sale agreements, license agreements, and intergovernmental and professional service agreements. She regularly attends board and commission meetings for local government clients and lectures on proper public meeting procedures. Courtney is a prolific writer, having authored and published numerous articles and papers on local government law matters.

Courtney has served as hearing officer for adjudications and prosecutor for ordinance violations. She has represented many special districts including park districts, school districts, community colleges, and library districts, as well as 911 emergency response system boards. Courtney has a deep understanding of the entitlement process, including municipal approvals for real estate development projects with zoning changes, special uses, variations, planned developments, annexation and development agreements.

Courtney is passionate about community service. She has volunteered for many years for the Make A Wish Foundation and its various impactful programs.

## Credentials

### EDUCATION

- John Marshall Law School, Juris Doctor
- University of Iowa, Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor in Business Administration

### PAST EXPERIANCE

- Legislative Aid, Staff Attorney, City of Chicago Committee on Finance Policy Division
- Extern Law Clerk, Illinois Attorney General Office, Environmental Division

### BAR ADMISSIONS/LICENSES

- Illinois

### MEMBERSHIPS

- Chicago Bar Association

## Publications

- "City's "Criticism Policy" Faces Uphill Legal Challenge Under the First Amendment," *Elrod Friedman Alert*, October 28, 2024
- "Missing the FOIA Statutory Response Deadline Could Cost You," *Local Government Lowdown*, August 1, 2022
- "Civil Penalties For FOIA Violations Survive Even After Documents Are Disclosed" *Local Government Lowdown*, July 5, 2022
- "Appellate Court Ensures Privacy Protection Under The Juvenile Court Act From A FOIA Request Regarding A Deceased Minor," *Local Government Lowdown*, April 13, 2022
- "Better Take Note...Proper Notice is Required for Hybrid Meetings," *Local Government Lowdown*, February 24, 2022
- "SCOTUS Blocks Vaccination Mandate," *Local Government Lowdown*, January 14, 2022
- "Driver's Personal Information Remains Protected," *Local Government Lowdown*, January 7, 2022
- "That Is Not Your Job! IELRA Arbitrator Exceeded His Authority By Reviewing A Party's Compliance With His Own Award," *Local Government Lowdown*, November 29, 2021
- "Risk Management: Zoning," *Illinois Municipal League, IML Review Magazine*, September 2019
- "Candidates Shouldn't Cruz Through Political Campaigns: Why asking for permission to use music is becoming so important on the campaign trail," *The John Marshall Review of Intellectual Property Law*, Vol. 16, Issue 4, 2016

## Community Service and Public Service

- *Volunteer*, Make A Wish Foundation Illinois, Walk for Wishes Committee, 2020-Present

## Speaking Engagements

- **Illinois Municipal League Conference Presenter 2022**, Are You Allowed to Do That? What Local Government Leadership Must Know About Ethics Requirements.

- **Illinois Association of Park Districts IPRA Conference Presenter**  
**2022, 2023**, Public Meeting Best Practices: Dealing with Engaged,  
Passionate, and Sometimes Unruly Members of the Public