Elrod Friedman LLP



Peter M. Friedman

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Overview

About Peter Friedman

Peter Friedman has an accomplished and broad real estate and government law practice, representing both private and public sector clients in all phases of government operations, real estate finance, acquisition, development, zoning and land use matters. He is the co-founder of Elrod Friedman LLP and serves as the firm's General Counsel.

Peter represents numerous Illinois local and state government agencies, municipalities, and counties on all aspects of government law, real estate, and development. Peter serves as City Attorney for the City of Des Plaines; as Village Attorney for the Villages of Lake Bluff and Winnetka; and as General Counsel to the Waukegan Port District (including the Waukegan Harbor and Marina and the Waukegan National Airport). He is General Counsel to the Chicago Association of Realtors and special outside counsel to the Teachers' Retirement System of the State of Illinois. He has represented the state of Illinois and the Illinois Medical District on significant public-private partnerships involving large multiuse developments as well as infrastructure and public transportation projects. He has also handled cyber security and related technology issues.

On real estate and transactional projects in Chicago, throughout Illinois and nationwide, Peter's private sector clients include property owners, pension funds, tenants, developers, and private equity groups. For these clients, Peter works on a broad range of real estate and transactional projects, including annexation, zoning, and development agreements, TIF and SSA financing, tax incentive and abatement agreements, mixed-use and multi-family developments, and public-private partnerships.

Peter has special knowledge and experience in environmental law as well as internal investigations related to procurement matters, regulatory compliance, employment issues, fraud, corporate governance, and criminal misconduct.

Peter has defended numerous lawsuits challenging local zoning and land use controls. He has handled several local government lawsuits involving civil rights, annexation disputes, contract actions, environmental enforcement, and numerous First Amendment claims. For both public and private sector clients, Peter has argued cases in Federal District and Appellate Courts and at all levels of state court, including successfully before the Illinois Supreme Court.

Peter served as co-counsel and ethics officer for the transition team of former Illinois Gov. Bruce Rauner. As part of this representation, he advised the administration on all issues related to Illinois ethics, procurement, personnel, employment, and government law.

Appointed by Cook County President Toni Preckwinkle, Peter serves on the board and as vice-chairman of the Cook County Land Bank Authority (CCLBA) and as Chairman of the CCLBA's property acquisition committee.

Chambers USA 2025 placed Peter in the highest band in Illinois (*Band 1*). Here is a link to the full Chambers 2025 Ranking: Link

Credentials

EDUCATION

- American University, Washington College of Law, J.D.
- Allegheny College, B.A.

PAST EXPERIENCE

- Judicial Clerk, Judge Suzanne B. Conlon, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois
- Legislative Director, Congressman John E. Porter (IL-10), Washington, D.C.

BAR ADMISSIONS/LICENSES

- Illinois
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of Illinois
- 7th Circuit Court of Appeals

HONORS & AWARDS

- Chambers USA – America's Leading Business Lawyers guide, Real Estate: Zoning/Land Use, 2012 – 2020; Band 1, 2021 – 2022
- The Best Lawyers in America Guide, Land Use and Zoning Law, 2016-2023; Government Relations, 2013-2023; and Real Estate Law, 2017-2023
- The Best Lawyers in America Guide, Chicago Land Use & Zoning Lawyer of the Year, 2022
- Illinois Super Lawyers Magazine, 2009, 2013-2019
- The Legal 500 USA, Real Estate & Construction: Land Use/Zoning, 2019

Representative Matters

- Representation of Glenstar in obtaining Chicago City Council approval of planned development amendment for high-profile project authorizing construction of a 297 multi-unit residential, transit oriented development in the O'Hare Community Area, including 59 affordable units under the City's amended Affordable Requirements Ordinance.
- Representation of Hines in securing zoning and entitlements for the 17-acre Oak Brook Commons mixed use development in Oak Brook, IL.
- Representation of MedProperties Group to obtain zoning and entitlements for an approximately 80,000 square foot premier, state-of-art medical office building in Oak Brook, IL.
- Representation of Citgo Petroleum Company with regard to annexation, zoning, and real estate development issues for the company's Lemont, IL refinery and associated real estate holdings.
- Representation of the City of Chicago in the establishment of the Neighborhood Opportunity Floor Area Bonus program for central area growth and neighborhood development.
- Representation of Elion Partners on zoning, real estate financing and TIF issues related to the RidgePort Logistics Centre, a 22 million-square-foot rail-serviced master planned industrial development in Wilmington, IL.
- Representation of the Village of Winnetka in stormwater utility

management and negotiation of county, school district, and park district intergovernmental agreements providing for a large-scale stormwater maintenance and flood mitigation initiative.

Publications

- Supreme Court Will Define When Zoning Restrictions "Substantially Burden" Religious Exercise Under RLUIPA | *Elrod Friedman Client Alert* | October 5, 2026
- Supreme Court to Decide When First Amendment Claims Can Bypass the Local Zoning Process | *Elrod Friedman Client Alert* | September 9, 2026
- Federal Court Dismisses Challenge to Illinois Sanctuary Policies, Upholding Local Control Over Immigration Enforcement | *Elrod Friedman Client Alert* | February 24, 2026
- Building Blocks of the BUILD Agenda; Part 2: Initiative Imposes Minimum Parking Requirements | *Elrod Friedman Client Alert* | February 24, 2026
- Illinois Supreme Court Upholds Broad Authority for Municipalities to Impose Road Improvement Impact Fees on Development Projects | *Elrod Friedman Client Alert* | November 2024
- US Supreme Court to Decide Whether a Local Government Board Can Censure One of its Members | *Elrod Friedman Client Alert* | September 2021
- Chicago City Council Adopts Mayor's Air Quality Ordinance Including Sweeping New Zoning Rules for Industrial Developments | *Elrod Friedman Client Alert* | March 2021
- 2016 Transportation Lockbox Constitutional Amendment Does Not Restrict Home Rule Taxes | *Elrod Friedman Client Alert* | March 8, 2021
- U.S. Supreme Court Tightens Scrutiny on Regulations Impacting Religion | *Elrod Friedman Client Alert* | December 2, 2020
- Litigation Update: State and Federal Courts Continue to Uphold the Constitutionality of COVID-19 Executive Orders (with the exception of the Clay County Circuit Court) | *Elrod Friedman Client Alert* | August 13, 2020
- Suspension of Open Meetings Act During Covid-19 Emergency | *Chicago Bar Association Record* | May 2020

- Supreme Court's "Narrow" Wedding Cake Ruling a Cautionary Tale for Government Decision-Makers | *Client Alert* | June 2018
- Illinois Appellate Court Expands PSEBA Exposure for Illinois Local Governments | *Client Alert* | February 2018
- Illinois Sanctuary Jurisdiction Law: What it Means for Local Governments | *Client Alert* | August 2017
- Illinois Supreme Court Reverses Attorney General Binding Opinion on Open Meetings Act Issues | *Client Alert* | July 2017
- Illinois Attorney General Limits "Probable or Imminent Litigation" OMA Exception for Closed Meetings | *Client Alert* | June 2017
- What Illinois Sanctuary City Bill Means for Local Governments | *Law360* | June 2017
- Illinois Supreme Court Abolishes Long-Standing Public Duty Rule | *Client Alert* | January 2016
- Municipal Property | *Local Government, Illinois Municipal Law Series, Illinois Institute for Continuing Legal Education*
- What is Proper Notice for Rezonings? Illinois Supreme Court Holds Newspaper Notice Unconstitutional | Passalino et al v. City of Zion | *Client Alert* | December 2009
- Does the Illinois Open Meetings Act Violate the First Amendment? | *Local Government Law* | December 2009
- The Illinois Open Meetings Act – Caution the Watchword on Use of E-Mails | *Client Alert* | August 2009
- Good News for Adult Use Zoning Regulations | *ISBA Local Government Law Newsletter* | March 2009

Speaking Engagements

- Northwestern Law School Land Use and Local Government Course "Public Finance," 2025
- Understanding Zoning for Practitioners, presented by the Chicago Association of Realtors, April 2022
- ULI Chicago Front Stoop Series: *Cook County Land Bank: An Incubator for Urban Innovation & Revitalization*, January 2022

- IICLE Local Government Institute 2015-2023
- John Marshall 2018 Kratovil Conference: *An Inflection Point in Land Development*
- Illinois Municipal League Spring 2017 Seminar: *Land Use Exactions, Takings, and Impact Fees*
- Testimony – Illinois Advisory Committee for the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights: *Local Land Use Decisions under RLUIPA*, August 2014
- March Global Real Estate Conference, *Real Estate Industry Leadership Panelist*, October 2012

Community and Public Service

- Chicago Bar Association, Local Government Committee, Past Chairman
- CityPAC, Board Member, Former President
- Illinois Local Government Lawyers Association
- Lake County Bar Association, Local Government Committee, Past Chairman
- Lambda Alpha International Honorary Land Economics Society
- Leadership Greater Chicago, Class of 2012
- Urban Land Institute, Chicago Product Council
- Wexner Heritage Program, Graduate
- Cook County Land Bank Authority, Vice Chairman and Board of Directors
- Epic Academy, Board Member
- Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago, Government Affairs Committee, Past Co-Chair

In the News

Elrod Friedman LLP

News Articles

- Lake Bluff trustees closer to a vote on policies on possible federal agents' immigration actions in the village | Chicago Tribune | December 2, 2025
- Sunset Foods, Northfield officials talk timeline and other plans for takeover of Mariano's site | The Record: North Shore | August 8, 2025
- 'You Have To Do Something And I Believe You Will': Residents plead with Winnetka trustees to join fight against gun violence | The Record: North Shore | August 10, 2022
- Federal judge dismisses refiled Winnetka homeowner lawsuit over lake bluffs | Chicago Tribune | September 4, 2026
- Winnetka's lakefront mansion owners lose another round on bluff-protection ordinance | Crain's Chicago Business | September 4, 2026