



Rita M. Connerly

Director

T: (303) 894-4411

rconnerly@fwlaw.com

Few lawyers possess the unique combination of knowledge and experience in public sector and real estate law that Rita offers her clients as they navigate through the land entitlement and development processes. Rita's collaborative approach to commercial, residential, and mixed-use real-estate development is rooted in her background as former in-house counsel and government lawyer handling complex legal matters. Her practice encompasses all aspects of land entitlement and real estate development, including zoning, purchase and sale agreements, development agreements, and the drafting of covenants, easements, and construction documents.

Rita's passion for her clients and her work is evident across the Front Range, where she has created and fostered multiple public-private partnerships aimed at improving local communities. She regularly works with land owners and developers during the land use process, working closely with federal, state, and local governments, mineral interest owners and neighborhood associations to secure support for and timely approval of residential, commercial, and mixed-use projects.

Regardless of the underlying matter, Rita shares her clients' enthusiasm and vision for infusing local communities with sustainable, revitalizing developments that can offer jobs, homes, and entertainment to Colorado's residents. Clients rely on Rita to efficiently navigate municipal and state codes, and entities like special districts and urban renewal authorities. Because of her decades of experience on both sides of real estate transactions, she adds value to every project. When needed, Rita works with the state legislature and elected officials to help facilitate progress. A deal-maker at heart, Rita also partners with clients throughout their projects, offering insights on legal, marketing, and business plans alike.

Rita represents clients in local, state, federal, and administrative proceedings. She has successfully argued before both the Colorado Court of Appeals and the Colorado Supreme Court. Rita also regularly creates, represents, and manages special districts. She has provided day-to-day legal advice to elected officials and department directors on a full range of public sector law issues.

Education

University of Denver Sturm College of Law, J.D., 1990
University of Denver, B.A., *with honors*, 1987

Bar Admissions

Colorado
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit

Practice Areas

Corporate
Public Policy and Governmental Relations
Real Estate
Securities Offerings, Regulation, and Compliance

Sectors

Affordable Housing
Energy and Utilities

Professional Affiliations

- Adams County Bar Association
- Adams County Economic Development
 - Executive Committee officer, third term, 2011 - present
 - Vice Chair, 2016
- Aurora Economic Development Corporation
 - Executive Committee, chair, 2013, 2016
- Castle Rock Economic Development
 - Board of Directors, 2013
- Denver Bar Association
- Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce
- Douglas County Bar Association
- Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation
 - Colorado Space Coalition, 2011 - present
 - Metro Denver Aviation Coalition, 2008 - present
 - Transportation Committee, chair, 2011-2012
- Special District Association

Community Involvement

- Le Bal de Ballet Committee, 2016

Recognition

- *The Best Lawyers in America*, 2025-2026

Fairfield and Woods, P.C.

fwlaw.com

- Real Estate Law
- *5280 Magazine's Top Lawyers, 2025*
 - Real Estate
- *Colorad Super Lawyers*
 - Real Estate, 2010-2018; 2021; 2025-2026
- *Law Week Colorado*
 - Top Woman Lawyer, 2019
 - Top Woman Lawyer, 2012
 - People's Choice Best Real Estate Lawyer, 2022, 2024
- *Denver Business Journal, Outstanding Women in Business*
 - Winner, 2019
 - Finalist, 2012
- Adams County Economic Development
 - Member of the Year, 2009



Presentations

- "Spaceport Colorado," Colorado Bar Association Leadership Training (June 20, 2014)
- "Spaceport Colorado," Development Counselors International Press Trip (February 21, 2013)