

Joseph A. Kovecses, Jr.

OF COUNSEL

407.418.6704

joseph.kovecses@lowndes-law.com



Joseph "Joe" Kovecses focuses on land use, zoning and real estate development throughout Florida. His practice includes land use entitlements, permitting, code enforcement, and litigation.

Joe guides clients through the intricate regulations and land use laws governing property development in Florida, managing projects from initial concept to certificates of occupancy. He assists with every stage of the development approval process, from initial due diligence—identifying current entitlements and outlining the project's path forward—to securing final approvals. Joe frequently represents clients before county and municipal boards, advocating at public hearings for comprehensive plan amendments, zoning applications, and various other development orders.

With over a decade of litigation experience, Joe is adept at handling contested matters, vigorously defending his clients' projects. During land use hearings, he promptly addresses unexpected concerns and comments from elected and appointed government officials, neighbors, and concerned citizens, facilitating positive outcomes for his clients with his quick and effective responses.

Joe has extensive experience representing clients in land use, real estate, and commercial litigation matters in Florida state and federal courts. From pre-suit negotiations through to final judgment following trial, and everything in between, Joe provides honest counsel and advocates strongly for the best possible outcome. He was recognized in the Best Lawyers in America guide for Commercial Litigation for the 2025 guide year.

Additionally, Joe has significant experience representing property owners in county and municipal code enforcement proceedings. These proceedings vary by jurisdiction but typically involve a violation phase, a compliance phase, and, where applicable, a lien reduction phase. Joe has successfully contested alleged violations, negotiated extended compliance schedules, and advocated for substantial reductions in code enforcement liens, recently securing a nearly \$475,000 lien reduction.

Practices & Industries

Land Use & Zoning
Multifamily Housing
Environmental Law
Hospitality & Leisure
Affordable Housing
Business Services
Litigation

Admissions

Florida
U.S. District Court, Middle District of Florida
U.S. District Court, Northern District of Florida
U.S. District Court, Southern District of Florida

Education

- University of Florida Levin College of Law, J.D., *magna cum laude*, 2012
- University of Central Florida, B.S., 2008; Biology

Joe is a member of The Florida Bar and is admitted to practice in all Florida state courts and in federal court before the United States District Courts for the Northern, Middle, and Southern Districts of Florida. He is also a member of the George C. Young American Inn of Court. Joe has been recognized by Martindale-Hubbell since 2019 as an AV Preeminent attorney, representing the highest level of legal ability and ethical standards according to its peer review ratings system. Joe also serves on the Board of Directors of the Orlando Family Stage, whose mission is to empower young people to be brave and empathetic by creating quality theatrical experiences.

When not working, Joe enjoys spending time with his wife and two boys. They enjoy fishing, hiking, skiing when possible, and generally exploring nature. Joe has been fortunate enough to hike sections of the Appalachian Trail, in Rocky Mountain National Park, from rim to rim in the Grand Canyon, over the Salkantay Pass to Machuu Picchu in Peru, and to the summit of Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania.

Experience

Land Use

- Assisted development team in securing county commission approval for a car wash facility in a rural settlement.
- Assisted client team in negotiating with the Florida Department of Transportation to significantly reduce the required roadway improvements for a driveway access permit.

Litigation

- Obtained final summary judgment on behalf of a developer-intervenor in a consistency challenge brought against a rezoning ordinance filed under Section 163.3215, Florida Statutes, part of Florida's Community Planning Act.
- Represented the interests of a developer-intervenor in a 5-day Florida Division of Administrative Hearings (DOAH) evidentiary hearing in a case challenging a county's amendment of its land development code under Section 163.3213, Florida Statutes, part of Florida Community Planning Act.
- Obtained dismissal of a retaliatory defamation case related to an ongoing partnership dispute.
- Successfully negotiated the resolution of a contentiously litigated case for partition of a hotel property.
- Successfully negotiated the resolution of a partnership dispute regarding a landscaping company.

Code Enforcement

- Negotiated extended compliance schedules for Osceola County's signage ordinance for commercial properties within the County's West U.S. 192 Development Corridor.
- Secured a \$475,000 reduction of a \$500,000 code enforcement lien on a vacant residential parcel following its abandonment by the prior owner.
- Secured a \$43,000 reduction of a code enforcement lien on a commercial property due to a compliance delay caused by a hurricane.

Recognitions

- Martindale–Hubbell AV Preeminent Peer Review Rated
- *The Best Lawyers in America* guide, Commercial Litigation, 2025

Community Activities

- Orlando Family Stage, Board of Directors

Professional Certifications & Memberships

- Orange County Bar Association

News

Best Lawyers Recognizes 59 Lowndes Attorneys in 2025, One Named Lawyer of the Year
08.15.2024 | AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Lowndes Welcomes Joe Kovecses as Of Counsel to Land Use Practice
10.12.2022 | FIRM NEWS

Publications

Florida Law Update: Slack Messages May Be Privileged Communication
04.24.2025 | ARTICLE

Recent Court Decisions Highlight Zoning Enforcement Challenges
01.13.2025 | ARTICLE

Charter Amendments Pass in Orange County and Seminole County
11.07.2024 | ARTICLE

Orange County Proposes to Implement Vision 2050 and Orange Code in September 2024
05.09.2024 | ARTICLE

Florida Legislature to Consider Wide-Ranging Affordable Housing Bill
01.30.2023 | ARTICLE