



# Nick Wood

Partner, Snell & Wilmer

Nicholas J. Wood, P.L.L.C., partner, Snell & Wilmer, certainly has his finger on the pulse of commercial real estate activity in the Valley, and specifically Downtown Phoenix. “I have completed, or am currently working on, 50 projects in in Downtown Phoenix,” he says. “Downtown is a vibrant and attractive place to live, to work and to play. It is the central hub of the fifth largest city in the nation and brings a cache and brand that continues to grow with each new groundbreaking ceremony.”

## Starting Points

The highly successful and prolific zoning attorney has spent his career shaping the Greater Phoenix landscape with an impressive portfolio of developments. “I am the only zoning and land-use attorney in Arizona that also has a LL.M. in Tax (master’s in law),” he says. “As such, there are 22 government property lease excise tax transactions (8-year tax abatement leases, or GPLETs) in Downtown Phoenix, and I have structured 18 of them, 17 of which are for high-rise buildings.”

## Resume

Licensed to practice in Arizona, Wisconsin and Colorado, Wood’s curriculum vitae is one of the most distinguished in the legal profession. His work over the years has included some of the most notable developments in the region including The OIC condo tower and

hotel, the Hilton Garden Inn, 44 Monroe (34-story condo tower), the Hampton Inn hotel, the Cambria hotel, the Marriott Residence Inn, the Hyatt Place hotel, the Hilton Garden Inn (adaptive reuse); Adeline, X Social, Hubbard 6th and Garfield, and the Stewart, tax structure for the State Farm Project in Tempe, Mayo expansion Phoenix, and Optima Kierland.

## Sports

Greater Phoenix is one of only 13 U.S. metros that can boast of hosting all four major professional sports teams: baseball, football, basketball and hockey. The “Big 4” are an important source of economic vigor for the region with team revenues generating hundreds of millions, and Diamondbacks, Cardinals, Suns and Coyotes franchises registering multibillion dollar valuations. Wood understands

this fact as he is directly involved with transactions involving the puck and the national pastime. “I am currently lead outside counsel with respect to a proposal by Alex Meruelo, the owner of the Coyotes hockey team, as he seeks approval to develop an almost \$2 billion arena and entertainment complex in Tempe,” he says. “The project would completely change the complexion not only of Tempe but the entire Valley area, and it is going to be entirely privately financed with not a dime coming from taxpayers. I am pretty excited about being on the front lines as we try to build a complex that will contain a more than 16,000-seat arena, office and residential

development, multiple hotels, a theater, a ‘Restaurant Row’ and a retail center. It is not a small project.”

As for Major League Baseball, Wood is providing his expertise on financing arrangements. “I created tax structure legislation, which was passed in 2021 and signed by the governor, for the Diamondbacks to permit the organization to make hundreds of millions of dollars of improvements to Chase Field without using any taxpayer money,” he says.

## Success

Throughout his storied career, Wood has navigated entitlement scenarios,

both complex and fulfilling. “The Arizona Biltmore Resort rezoning case was certainly the most challenging, while the most rewarding has been my pro bono, counsel to Central Arizona Shelter Services organization for over 10 years,” he says. “We just completed all of the zoning entitlements for a new Haven project, which is a converted hotel which will house elderly former homeless adults.”

## Opportunity

With the significant population inflow into the Valley, Wood cites the need for significant investment in housing, specifically multifamily.

“Organized opposition to apartments is becoming a major problem for the development community. The problem is that we are facing a housing crisis that is unprecedented,” he says. “Urban sprawl is not the answer. The solution is providing quality concentrated housing options in urban and suburban areas.”

## Future

Wood’s calendar in 2022 shows no signs of slowing down. “I have never been busier in my career,” he says. “I am thankful and grateful to continue to play a small part in the growth of Downtown Phoenix and the Valley. It is both humbling and gratifying.”

Central Station  
Central Avenue &  
Van Buren Street

