

Loeb & Loeb lends pro bono hand to Pershing Square

By **Amanda Schallert**
Daily Journal Staff Writer

Before the final design blueprints for a new Pershing Square could be submitted, the nonprofit organizing the downtown Los Angeles park's remodel needed help laying some legal groundwork.

A team of attorneys at Loeb & Loeb LLP has sought to help the organization, called Pershing Square Renew, over the past two years as pro bono counsel, as the group works to transform the 150-year-old urban park.

Efforts to turn the five-acre park into a world class public space started about three years ago, said Eduardo Santana, the non-profit's executive director.

This month marks a milestone in the park's development, as a jury of Los Angeles leaders will choose the final design for the project on May 12.

The project, promoted by City Councilmember Jose Huizar, is a collaboration between the city and the investment management firm MacFarlane Partners, among other groups, Santana said. Finding a way to organize the parties' legal relationship required the involvement of Loeb & Loeb attorneys led by L.A.-based partners Allan

Abshez and Steven Hurdle.

Abshez helped the nonprofit group officially collaborate with the city and private partners by developing a framework agreement, which the city approved in November. Under the agreement, Pershing Square Renew gained the authority to proceed with the design competition and move forward with construction, though the city owns the park, Abshez said.

Serving as pro bono counsel fits with Loeb & Loeb's ongoing civic commitment and connection to L.A., said Hurdle, who serves as the nonprofit's corporate counsel. "I think somebody had to do it, regardless of whether it was us or not, and we had the expertise both on the real estate and corporate side to help us out," Hurdle said.

Moving forward, Loeb & Loeb plans to help Pershing Square Renew work through more contracts and fundraising. The nonprofit has raised about \$2 million in public and private donations for the project, which could cost more than \$50 million, Santana said.

Santana called the day Loeb & Loeb came on board a turning point for the group.

"It gave us legitimacy and peace of mind that the steps we were taking were without risk," he said.



ALLAN ABSHEZ
Loeb & Loeb



STEVEN HURDLE
Loeb & Loeb