

## Press Release

# Akerman Enhances Real Estate Strengths with Christopher Hayes in Orlando, Stephen Tilbrook in Fort Lauderdale

August 5, 2019

## Firm Expands Transactional, Land Use and Environmental Real Estate Capabilities

Akerman LLP, a top 100 U.S. law firm serving clients across the Americas, today announced the expansion of its national Real Estate Practice Group with two partners, further enhancing the core strengths of the firm. Christopher Hayes joins Akerman in Orlando from Killgore, Pearlman, Semanie, Denius & Squires, P.A. and brings thorough transactional real estate experience, while Stephen Tilbrook joins in Fort Lauderdale from GrayRobinson, P.A. and focuses his practice in complex land use, development and environmental matters.

“Our real estate team is continually growing to fit the needs of the developers, owners, and investors that we represent,” said Eric Rapkin, chair of Akerman’s Real Estate Practice Group. “Chris and Stephen bring crucial skills that will allow us to continue to solve these clients’ most pressing real estate issues.”

Akerman’s core strengths in real estate have expanded with the addition of 33 lawyers to the group in multiple key markets since 2018. Alan Cohen, chair of the Real Estate Finance Practice, and four additional lawyers joined Akerman in New York, broadening the practice group’s financing

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### Related People

William J. Bernfeld  
Alan S. Cohen  
Christopher W. Hayes  
Irán Hopkins  
Mark C. McElree  
Eric D. Rapkin  
Stephen K. Tilbrook

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### Related Work

Environment and  
Natural Resources  
Land Use and  
Development  
Real Estate

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### Related Offices

Fort Lauderdale  
Orlando

capabilities for lender and borrower clients. In Dallas, Real Estate Partners Mark McElree and Kacy Whitehead expanded the firm's real estate transactional capabilities in Texas. In Los Angeles, a fast-growing office, partners Irán Hopkins and William Bernfeld jointly brought extensive experience in a variety of U.S. and international real estate, corporate and commercial transactions.

### **Christopher Hayes**

Hayes represents developers, homebuilders, and investors in the acquisition, development, and sale of real property. He has overseen numerous complex acquisitions and dispositions. As part of his transactional practice, Hayes also represents clients in retail and office space leasing. Additionally, he works with investors and owners in acquiring and selling small and mid-market sized businesses, having worked on over 65 auto and motorcycle dealership transactions, and multiple other non-automotive asset and equity transfers.

### **Stephen Tilbrook**

Tilbrook has over 25 years of experience practicing land use and environmental law, and he focuses his practice on complex land use, development, and environmental matters throughout the state of Florida. He represents property owners, expanding businesses, developers, financial institutions, and institutional clients, including hospitals, universities, regional shopping centers and real estate investment trusts.

### **About Akerman**

Akerman LLP is a top 100 U.S. law firm recognized among the most forward thinking firms in the industry by *Financial Times*. Its more than 700 lawyers and business professionals collaborate with the world's most successful enterprises and entrepreneurs to navigate change, seize opportunities, and help drive innovation and growth. Akerman is known for its results in middle market M&A and complex disputes, and for helping clients achieve their most important business objectives in

the financial services, real estate and other dynamic sectors across the United States and Latin America.

Akerman's Real Estate Practice Group offers comprehensive and fully integrated project counsel services to clients across the United States and Latin America. With substantial industry experience and local market insights, the firm represents clients in complex real estate transactions and financings, development and redevelopment projects, public-private initiatives and litigation. Recognized as a national tier one law firm for real estate law by U.S. News - Best Lawyers, the group advises investors, developers, builders, lenders, retailers, owners and corporate end users, often in high profile matters.