

People



John B. Wood

Partner, Real Estate

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John Busey Wood advises public and private companies on real estate acquisitions, facilities management, construction and development, commercial, hospitality, retail, and ground leasing, commercial property management, and brokerage. For more than 45 years, John has represented owners in the design and negotiation of commercial leases exceeding 100 million square feet of retail, office, and mixed-use space projects. He has national experience in developable land, improved property acquisitions and ground leasing, large scale retail and office developments, commercial lease fair market determinations, arbitrations and expert witness services, and national commercial leasing and management programs.

John directed the legal team in a national portfolio acquisition program with a value in excess of \$2 billion and participated in the development, leasing, and financing of over 4 million square feet of regional shopping malls and retail centers nationwide. Previously, he negotiated the largest ground/space lease transaction in the history of New York City, containing more than 1.6 million square feet and including “fast-track” rehabilitation, construction lending, permanent financing, and options for fee acquisition. In addition, John has advised, directed teams, and designed correlated construction contracts for “fast-track” design-build projects, conversions, and renovations in New York City, exceeding 8 million square feet, with values greater than \$4 billion.

John also regularly advises cross-border retailers in their U.S.-based entry and business formation and leasing. John has represented cross-border retailers in the roll-out of over 230 stores in the U.S. market in the last several years and in the negotiation of commercial leases and construction “fit-out” contracts.

John is currently a member of the Board of Legal Advisors to the Practising Law Institute (PLI), and previously served on the Board of Directors of the International Association of Corporate Real Estate Executives (NY Chapter), and the Board of Legal Advisors of New York Building Congress. John frequently lectures at major real estate brokerage firms in New York City, the Real Estate Board of New York

Areas of Experience

Real Estate
Construction Litigation and Dispute Resolution
Hospitality
Restaurant
Land Use and Development
Healthcare Real Estate
Public-Private Partnerships
Real Estate Acquisitions and Sales
Commercial Leasing and Development
Corporate Finance and Lending
Financial Services
Distressed Property
Lease Restructuring and Workouts

Education

J.D., Washburn University School of Law, 1977
M.B.A., University of Kansas, Accounting and Management, 1975
B.B.A., Washburn University, Accounting and Finance, 1973

Admissions

Bars

New York

Related Content

John Wood and Allison Nelson to Speak on
Negotiating Commercial Leases 2025
February 20, 2025

Akerman Lawyers Ranked in New York by *Super Lawyers Magazine*
November 04, 2024

112 Akerman Lawyers Across the U.S. Named to
2023 *Super Lawyers* and Rising Stars Lists
September 28, 2023

(REBNY), the New York University Schack Institute of Real Estate, and PLI, where he is the Chairman of the National Commercial Leasing Seminars. John is also a member of the American Arbitration Association Complex Commercial Neutral Panel.

Notable Work

Grumman Aerospace Center: Represented owner/builder Evangelista Enterprises on long-term ground lease “build-to-suit” for Grumman Aerospace Center in Bethpage, Long Island, New York.

Oncogene Science Center: Represented owner/builder North Shore University for long-term ground lease and “turnkey” construction of Oncogene Science Center advanced medical research installation.

2 Broadway: Represented Metropolitan Transportation Authority/NY Transit Authority/TBTA on long-term ground lessee for two million square foot “turnkey” total re-construction and expansion of 2 Broadway with base building core and shell full financing imbedded loan.

Manufacturing and Distribution Complex: Represented ground Lessee/Swedish Pharmaceutical Company for Long Term Ground Lease and construction of manufacturing and distribution complex.

Staten Island Development: Represented ground lessee/Developer BFC Partners LLC on long-term ground lease for development of a premium outlet mall, banquet center and hotel on Staten Island.

New York Ground Lease: Represented governments and private users in long-term ground lease complex development of over two million square feet in New York City.

California Retail Mall: Represented PIMCO and joint venture partners in a ground-up retail center creation and retail leasing.

Industrial: Represent owners in acquisition, construction, and management of industrial warehouses and industrial manufacturing and shipping complexes.

Hospitality: Represent owners in the negotiation of hotel purchase, construction and management agreements, restaurant and catering agreements, and design-build construction agreements.

Fast Track: Represent owners, builders, and developers in the assemblage fast-track design-build, and project administration on over 20 million square feet of office, mixed-use, and retail space.

Expert Witness and Arbitrator: Provide professional services for construction, ground leasing, and design-build related disputes.

Cross-Border Transactions: Represent international retailers in cross-border transactions related to the rollout of over 200 retail stores in the United States.

Published Work and Lectures

Presentations

- Practicing Law Institute, Speaker, “Negotiating Commercial Leases 2025,” February 20-21, 2025
- Practising Law Institute, Speaker, “Negotiating Commercial Leases: How Owners and Corporate Occupants Can Avoid Costly Errors,” New York, 1995-Present

- Practising Law Institute, Program Chair, “Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and Standards and Generally Accepted Auditing Standards and the application to Commercial Leases and Escalations/Additional Rentals: The Hidden Costs and Surprises,” 1995-Present
- Practising Law Institute, Speaker, “Fundamentals of Leasing 101,” 1995-Present
- New York University, Schack Institute of Real Estate, Adjunct Professor, “Fundamentals of Commercial Leasing,” 2005-present and “Navigating and Negotiating Commercial Leases,” 2010-Present
- Lorman Seminars, Speaker, “Anatomy of a Good Guy Guaranty,” 2016

Publications

- New York State Bar Association, Real Estate Titles, Fourth Edition, Author, Chapter 25, “Commercial Leasing,” May 2020
- Fastcase, Full Court Press, Author, “Negotiating and Drafting Commercial Leases,” A 2-Volume Treatise, 1995-2023
- American Bar Association, The Commercial Property Lease Vol. III, Author, “Negotiating and Drafting Office Leases,” 2001
- Lulu Press, NYU Schack Institute of Real Estate Textbook, Author, “Cross-Border for Beginners – First U.S. Business Location – Structuring for Success,” 2010-Present
- New York University Graduate Real Estate Program and NYU Schack Institute of Real Estate, Author, “Navigating The Dangerous Shoals of a Commercial Lease for Beginners”, Second Edition, 1992-Present
- Law Journal Seminars-Press, Author, “Negotiating and Drafting Office Leases,” a 3-Volume Treatise supplemented semi-annually, 1995-2022, Library of Congress ISBN 1-38832-061-7

Affiliations

- Practising Law Institute, Commercial Leasing Seminars, Chair; Real Estate Advisory Board, Member
- American Bar Association, Fellow; Commercial Leasing K-4 Committees, Past Chair
- American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, Member
- American Arbitration Association
 - Complex Commercial Neutral Panel, Member
 - Construction Panel, Member
- Association of Attorney-Certified Public Accountants, Member
- Boy Scouts of America, Westchester Putnam Counsel Board of Advisors
- National Eagle Scout Association, Life Member
- Scottish Rite and Masonic Organization, Member
- Sons of the American Revolution, Member

Honors and Distinctions

- American Bar Association Foundation, Peer Elected Fellow
- *Super Lawyers* Magazine, 2015-2024, Listed in New York for Real Estate
- Martindale-Hubbell, AV Preeminent Rated
- Martindale-Hubbell, Distinguished Lawyers
- *The Legal 500* 2012, Recommended for Real Estate

- Certified Public Accountant, 1978