



SOPHIA M. DESERAN

Partner

Phone: 216.928.2969

sdeseran@walterhav.com



SERVICES

Banking & Financial Services
Commercial Lending
Real Estate
Real Estate Development
Real Estate Leasing

EDUCATION

Cleveland State University College of Law, J.D.
Cum laude
Cleveland State Law Review articles editor
College of Wooster, B.A.

LICENSED TO PRACTICE

Ohio
U. S. District Court, Northern District of Ohio

RECOGNITION

2021-2023 – Recognized by BEST LAWYERS® 2007 – Present –
Trustee, Greater Cleveland Mortgage Bankers Association 2006 –
2007 – President, Greater Cleveland Mortgage Bankers Association
2005-2006 – Vice President, Greater Cleveland Mortgage Bankers
Association 2002 – Affiliate of the Year, Greater Cleveland Mortgage
Bankers Association National Association of Industrial and Office
Properties, Northern Ohio Chapter – Awards/Judging
Committee, 2005-current and Team Leader, 2016 – current

OVERVIEW

Sophia is a partner in Walter Haverfield's Real Estate Group located in Cleveland, Ohio. She has more than 30 years of experience assisting clients and property owners in the areas of commercial real estate and finance. Sophia focuses her practice on the purchase and sale of real property and real property development, real estate financing, leasing and general matters of commercial real estate law. She represents banks and institutional lenders, developers, and owners of retail, office, industrial and residential properties. Sophia also represents manufacturing companies, municipalities and other governmental entities, non-profit organizations, and individuals in real estate and finance related transactions.

Prior to her legal career, Sophia was an assistant vice president with National City Bank (nka PNC) where her experience included lending, business development, retail management and compliance. Sophia's banking experience has provided her with invaluable insight when representing lenders and borrowers.

EXPERIENCE

FINANCIAL SERVICES & LENDING

- Served as lender's counsel in connection with acquisition, development, construction and permanent loans secured by assorted real property, including vacant land, office buildings, shopping centers, marinas, and multi-family residential and mixed-use projects.
- Provides counsel in matters of loan modifications, workout matters and deeds in lieu of foreclosure, including the representation of a national developer in the simultaneous surrender of two regional shopping malls to the lender.
- Represents borrowers and lenders in leasehold mortgage financing transactions.
- Acted as local counsel to out-of-state financial institutions in real estate transactions.
- Advises borrowers in conduit financing transactions, acquisition, development and construction loans.
- Represented a national lender in individual purchases of construction loans and portfolio sales of loans.

REAL ESTATE

- Represents buyers and sellers of various types of real property: vacant land, shopping malls, agricultural and industrial properties, office and apartment complexes, and retail centers.
- Represents developers in conversion of various historic buildings to retail, office, residential, and hotel uses, including representation in complex financing arrangements involving new market and historic tax credits, and leasing arrangements.
- Represents developers in air rights lot splits and the preparation and negotiation of complex declarations of covenants, restrictions and easements.
- Represented a multinational manufacturer in connection with the formation of joint ventures involving industrial facilities located throughout the U.S. and Canada.
- Represented owners of shopping center properties, industrial sites, and mixed-use residential/office and retail sites in connection with the preparation and negotiation of complex declarations of covenants, restrictions and easements.
- Coordinates lot split and subdivision approvals.
- Counsels landlords and tenants in matters concerning occupancy, leases and subleases of retail, office, warehouse and industrial space.

- Acted as counsel to developer in low income housing tax credit transactions.
- Advised clients in Section 1031 like-kind exchanges of real property.

ASSOCIATIONS

- Trustee, Greater Cleveland Mortgage Bankers Association
- Member, Cleveland Chapter of the Commercial Real Estate Women's Senior Advisory Committee
- Member, American Bar Association's Real Property, Probate and Trust Law Sections
- Member, Ohio State Bar Association's Real Property Section
- Member, Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association's Real Estate Law Section
- Awards/Judging Committee and Team Leader, Northern Ohio Chapter of the National Association of Industrial and Office Properties