



Jon F. "Chip" Leyens Jr.

Shareholder

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Chip Leyens focuses his practice on commercial real estate, including leasing, development and land use, as well as financing and general business transactions.

Mr. Leyens represents clients, including both lenders and borrowers, in connection with a wide spectrum of commercial transactions, including leasehold development and financing, securitized transactions, asset-based financing, bond loans, public-private cooperative endeavors and utility development matters.

Mr. Leyens represents office, retail and industrial landlords, as well as tenants in significant office, hotel and retail transactions. He has developed extensive contacts with city and state officials in the areas of planning, zoning, subdivision, permitting, economic development and utility matters.

Prior to joining Baker Donelson, Mr. Leyens was a partner at Steeg Law and clerked for the Honorable Judge Ginger Berrigan, United States District Court, Eastern District of Louisiana. He also worked for the United States Department of Energy and on various political campaigns in the New Orleans area.

Representative Matters

- Represented tenant counsel on 215,000 square foot office lease for Class A office building in New Orleans. Representation including negotiating naming rights.
- Represented tenant, negotiating amendments and renewal of 350,000 square foot office lease for corporate headquarters.
- Rezoning and land use entitlements for major industrial projects.
- Zoning approvals for multi-site telecom tower construction.
- Tenant representation on hospital leases as part of public-private partnership agreements.
- Served as lead counsel for acquisition of \$90 million hotel.
- Served as lead counsel for development and negotiation of service contracts for \$50 million district energy plant.
- Served as real estate counsel for the acquisition of several merchant power plants (\$200 million to \$250 million each).
- Served as landlord's counsel for numerous 50,000 to 100,000 square foot warehouse leases, including leases to Fortune 500 companies for regional distribution centers.
- Represented a client in acquiring a \$50 million securitized loan for shopping center.
- Represented landlord in negotiating multiple 50,000 to 100,000 square foot leases in Class A office buildings in New Orleans.
- Served as real estate counsel for site acquisition and development in Louisiana for a national fast-food franchisee.
- Leasing counsel for company stores for national franchisors.
- Counsel for site acquisition and development for national gas station and convenience store operator.
- A leading global data center provider in multiple transactions, including acquiring and developing data center projects.
- Louisiana counsel in numerous financing transactions, including a Nevada gaming corporation in its \$2 billion credit facility.
- Advised an energy company in connection with a \$100 million project for a major university.



Professional Honors & Activities

- Fellow – American College of Real Estate Lawyers
- Listed in *Chambers USA* as a leading Real Estate lawyer in Louisiana since 2006
- AV® Preeminent™ Peer Review Rated by Martindale-Hubbell
- Listed in *The Best Lawyers of America*® for Real Estate Law since 2007; Commercial Transactions / UCC Law since 2023
- Named the Best Lawyers® 2017 Real Estate Law "Lawyer of the Year" in New Orleans
- Selected to Louisiana Super Lawyers in Real Estate Law (since 2008); listed among the top 50 attorneys in Louisiana (2020 – 2024); listed among the top 50 attorneys in New Orleans (2020 – 2025)
- Recognized as a "Top Lawyer" by *New Orleans Magazine* in Real Estate Law (2017 – 2025); Land Use and Zoning Law (2019 – 2021); Commercial Transactions/LLS Law (2022)
- *New Orleans City Business* 2015 Leadership in Law class
- Leadership in Law award from *New Orleans CityBusiness*
- Chair – American Bar Association's Ground Leasing Committee, Section of Real Property, Trust & Estate Law
- Member – American Bar Association's Community Outreach Committee and Continuing Legal Education Committee
- Former Member – Board of Zoning Adjustments of the City of New Orleans
- President – Longue Vue House and Gardens Board of Directors (2012)
- Past President – Crescent City Farmers Market
- Past Board Member – Jewish Family Services and Touro Synagogue



Speaking Engagements

- "Negotiating Green Leases, Latest Trends and Practical Tips," Law Seminars International (May 2011)
- "Workletters: From Design to Substantial Completion," ABA Section of Real Property, Trust & Estate Law (January 2011)



Education

- Harvard Law School, J.D., 1993
- Amherst College, magna cum laude, B.A., 1987
- London School of Economics, 1986



Admissions

- Louisiana, 1993
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Louisiana, 1996
- U.S. District Court, Middle and Western Districts of Louisiana, 1997
- Texas, 2007