



Melanie S. Lee Shareholder

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As a shareholder in Reinhart's Real Estate Practice and chair of the firm's Construction Law Team, Melanie Lee brings an exceptionally effective mix of practicality, common sense and technical knowledge to bear on behalf of her clients.

From world headquarters to startup workspaces, Melanie is dedicated to seeing her clients' projects through to fruition regardless of scope or complexity. To achieve her clients' ambitious plans, she analyzes and helps negotiate construction contracts and collaborates closely with them on a wide range of general purchase, sales and leasing matters. She's also highly skilled in dispute resolution, working to protect her clients' rights before issues escalate to litigation or mediation.

Melanie's experience encompasses a variety of developments, from condominiums to mixed-use projects to large industrial complexes. She frequently works with borrowers and lenders on commercial real estate finance, including construction loans. She has extensive experience advising declarants, unit owners and condominium association clients on association matters, providing guidance on a full spectrum of legal needs and strategic planning.

Melanie is known for her approachability, compassion and genuine care for her clients. She listens carefully, learns her clients' businesses and works diligently toward achieving the best outcomes with respect to budgetary constraints.

Before becoming a lawyer, Melanie taught math and social studies to middle school students. She implemented a mock trial program with the assistance of Drake University's law school, which inspired her to become an attorney. Her teaching skills are an asset, helping her explain complex legal matters in accessible ways.

Melanie is a regular speaker at State Bar of Wisconsin and other seminars on commercial real estate topics, including condominium law, due diligence and construction contracting. She is also a regular contributing author on books with the State Bar, including the "Wisconsin Law of Easements and Restrictive Covenants," "Drafter's Guide to Wisconsin Condominium Documents" and "Commercial Real Estate Transaction in Wisconsin."



Away from the office, Melanie is deeply invested in her children's activities and really enjoys cooking for family and friends, often creating her own recipes. Her family recently welcomed a small herd of alpacas and a llama to their farm and look forward to spending time together working with them.

Education

- J.D., with distinction, University of Iowa College of Law
- B.A., magna cum laude, Upper Iowa University

Bar Admissions

Wisconsin, Illinois, Arizona

Practices

- Real Estate

Services

- Real Estate Leasing
- Construction

Matters

- Assisting clients with the development of new condominiums, including mixed-use condominium developments
- Assisting condominium associations with best practice policies
- Resolving challenges with existing condominium developments, including mixed-use development
- Negotiating construction contracts for nonprofit and for-profit owners with a variety of delivery methods, including design-build, construction management and traditional design-bid-build; and with a variety of payment structures, including cost-plus, cost-plus with guaranteed maximum price and stipulated sum
- Assisting clients with the acquisition and disposition of real property, including the acquisition of distressed properties through short-sale, foreclosure and note purchase methods; and the acquisition and disposition of real property using 1031 exchange strategies
- Assisting lenders and borrowers with negotiation and documentation of new loans and work-outs
- Assisting contractor clients with developing best practice policies for construction contract administration



Honors & Affiliations

Honors

- Wisconsin Law Journal Powerlist: [Construction and Real Estate Law](#) (2026)
- Best Lawyers in America – “Lawyer of the Year” (Construction Law, 2017, 2019, 2025)
- Best Lawyers in America (Construction Law; Real Estate Law)
- Wisconsin Super Lawyers – Rising Stars Edition (for all eligible years)

Affiliations

- State Bar of Wisconsin

Presentations

- Regular speaker at Wisconsin State Bar and other seminars on commercial real estate topics, including condominium law, due diligence and construction contracting

Publications

- [Wisconsin Law of Easements and Restrictive Covenants](#), co-author, State Bar of Wisconsin PINNACLE (2022)
- [Commercial Real Estate Transactions in Wisconsin](#), contributing author, State Bar of Wisconsin PINNACLE
- [Drafter’s Guide to Wisconsin Condominium Documents](#), contributing author, State Bar of Wisconsin PINNACLE