



Sterling Scott Willis

Partner

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Practice Focus

Business Banking and Finance

Real Estate

About

Scott Willis practices primarily in the areas of commercial transactions, negotiated acquisitions, banking, and commercial real estate acquisitions, development, and financing.

“[Scott] is a fantastic lawyer.” —Real Estate Client, *Chambers and Partners*

Across his career, Scott has consistently held leadership roles in major professional organizations focused on real estate, banking, and transactional law. He is a fellow of the [American College of Real Estate Lawyers](#) (ACREL) and serves as secretary of its [2026 Board of Governors](#). He is also a member of the [American College of Mortgage Attorneys](#) (ACMA), where he serves on the Board of Regents.

Scott frequently lectures on commercial transactions and legal opinion issues and has served as a guest lecturer at LSU Law School, where he is also an emeritus member of the Alumni Board of Trustees.

Experience

- Served as counsel to Sunrise Foods International in connection with the establishment of the first U.S. dedicated natural grain facility at the Port of New Orleans.

- Served as counsel to the New Orleans Convention Center, which controls the majority of a 47-acre property along the east bank of the Mississippi River, in negotiations for the master development of and ground leases for [the \\$1 billion mixed-use River District development project](#); current plans include a new office building to house Shell Oil's Gulf of Mexico headquarters, a Top Golf entertainment complex, and approximately 900 mixed-income apartments and condominiums, including space for those qualifying for affordable or workforce housing rents.
- \$60 million acquisition of the Pan American Life Building in New Orleans by Stirling Properties, which transaction was referenced in The Wall Street Journal on December 8, 2010, as its "Deal of the Week."
- Rouses Supermarkets' acquisition of the southern division of A&P Supermarkets and subsequent expansion to 80 plus stores, including the leasing, construction and remodeling of numerous facilities.
- Acquisition, financing, and transfer of over two dozen hotel developments.
- Fauji Fertilizer's acquisition, dismantlement, shipping, and redevelopment of a large chemical facility from Louisiana to Pakistan.
- Acquisition and financing of The Canal Place mixed-use development in Louisiana.
- Development and financing of several above ground and below ground natural gas storage facilities.
- Stirling Properties' development of the River Chase and Fremaux mixed-use communities in St. Tammany Parish, the Ambassador Town Center in Lafayette, the Mid-City Market in New Orleans, and Target-anchored shopping centers in Bossier City and Lafayette.
- Acquisition and later sale of a leading fuel and lubricants supplier.
- Numerous helicopter and marine vessel financings.
- Regularly represent borrowers in syndicated commercial real estate financings.
- President of the firm's affiliated title company, Commercial Title Agency, Inc., agent for Fidelity National Title Insurance Company, First American Title Insurance Company, Chicago Title Insurance Company and Stewart Title Guaranty Company.

Professional Activities & Community Involvement

Professional Activities

- American College of Real Estate Lawyers (ACREL): Fellow; Secretary, 2026 Board of Governors; Past Chair, Attorneys' Opinions Committee
- American College of Mortgage Attorneys (ACMA): Member; Board of Regents; Past Chair, Opinions Committee
- American Bar Association Real Property Trust and Estate Law Section: Past Chair, standing CLE Committee; Former Supervisory Council Member; Past Chair, Committee on Legal Opinions

- Member, Board of Directors, [Working Group on Legal Opinions](#) Foundation
- Past Chair, Louisiana Bankers Association Bank Counsel Committee

Community Involvement

- Emeritus Member, LSU Law School Alumni Board of Trustees
- Past Chair, New Orleans Bureau of Governmental Research

Recognitions

- **Chambers USA:** Banking & Finance and Real Estate, *since 2004*
- **Super Lawyers,** Real Estate, Banking, Business & Corporate, *since 2007*
- **<i>Inside New Orleans</i>:** Readers' Favorite Elite Lawyers List for Banking and Financial Law, Real Estate Law, *2025*
- **Super Lawyer:** Top 50 Louisiana Lawyers, *2012-2015; 2017*
- **Best Lawyers®: "Lawyer of the Year,"** Equipment Finance Law, New Orleans, *2012, 2017, 2021, 2025*
- **New Orleans Magazine:** Top Lawyers List for Real Estate Law, *2021, 2024, 2025*
- **The Best Lawyers in America®,** Banking and Finance Law, Corporate Law, Equipment Finance Law, and Real Estate Law, *since 2005*
- **Best Lawyers®: "Lawyer of the Year,"** Real Estate Law, New Orleans, *2020*
- **Best Lawyers®: "Lawyer of the Year,"** Banking and Finance Law, New Orleans, *2016 and 2018*
- **Lawdragon:** 500 Leading Real Estate Lawyers, *2025*
- **New Orleans Super Lawyer:** Top 50, *2013-2015; 2017*
- **International Who's Who of Business Lawyers Real Estate** *since 2011*
- **Who's Who Legal: Thought Leaders Global Elite 2020,** Real Estate

Media

Publications

Presentations

- Author, "Managing Professional Liability Risks in Preparing Legal Opinions," ALI CLE: *The Practical Real Estate Lawyer*, March 2025.
- Editor, *Opinions Matters*, the newsletter of the Legal Opinions Committee of the ABA Real Property, Trust and Estate Laws Section.
- Co-author, "Title Insurance or Title Opinion Letters?" 7 No. 1 REAL PROP. TR. & EST. O.M. 11, Spring/Summer 2023.
- Co-editor, "Uniform Commercial Code Opinions in Real Estate Finance Transactions" by ACMA, ACREL and RPTE. 53 REAL PROP. TR. & EST. L. J. 137, Fall/Winter 2018.

- Co-editor, “Local Counsel Opinion Letters in Real Estate Finance Transactions,” A Supplement to the Real Estate Finance Opinion Report of 2012 by ACMA, ACREL and RPTE, 51 REAL PROP. TR & EST. L. J. 137, Fall 2016.
- Author of Article 9 Remedies in West’s Louisiana Statutes Annotated Code of Civil Procedure
- Co-presenter, “Follow-On Opinions in Financing Transactions,” American College of Mortgage Attorneys 2025 Annual Meeting, Oct. 2025.
- Podcast guest, “Third Party Legal Opinions,” The Deep Dirt Dive — A Real Estate Law Podcast, American College of Real Estate Lawyers, July 2025.
- Member of the drafting group for the ABA/ACREL Real Estate Opinion Letter Guidelines 38 REAL. PROP. PROB. & TR. J. 241, 2003.

Credentials

Education

Admissions

- J.D. from Louisiana State University, 1983
 - Associate Editor of the Louisiana Law Review
 - Order of the Coif
- B.A. from Louisiana State University, 1980
- Louisiana

Recent News

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Apr 10, 2026

[Fishman Haygood Represents Danos Group Holdings in Acquisition of AXion Logistics](#)

Mar 27, 2026

[Super Lawyers® Recognizes 25 Fishman Haygood Attorneys & Names Bendana, Herman, Manthey, and Nobles to "Top" Lists](#)

Notable Rankings



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