



John M. Coles

Partner

Transportation, Logistics & Trade Industry Group Chair

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OVERVIEW:

John is a member of the firm's Real Estate and Business practice groups with more than twenty years of experience. On the real estate side, he represents developers, business owners, landlords, lenders, property managers, and foundations in both commercial and residential matters. He has extensive experience negotiating and drafting leases, handling commercial and residential leasing transactions, and advising on the acquisition, disposition, and financing of real estate projects. His work also includes advising on the creation and governance of planned communities and condominiums.

John's experience spans large-scale commercial transactions as well as transactions for closely held businesses and individual investors. He frequently helps clients structure and close deals efficiently, balancing risk management with practical business goals. He has also represented clients in real estate tax assessment appeals across eastern Pennsylvania and regularly counsels landlords in bankruptcy and workout situations involving commercial tenants.

In addition to his real estate practice, John counsels business clients on a wide range of corporate matters, including entity formation, governance issues, purchase and sale agreements, broker agreements, mergers, and stock or asset acquisitions. He also serves as outside counsel to businesses, foundations and other organizations, providing ongoing guidance on contracts, leases and day-to-day operational needs.

EDUCATION:

- Dickinson School of Law, J.D., magna cum laude
- Lebanon Valley College, B.A., summa cum laude

ADMISSIONS:

- Pennsylvania
- U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania

PRACTICE AREAS:

- Real Estate
- Title Insurance
- Business
- Land Use
- Finance & Creditors' Rights

INDUSTRY GROUPS:

- Hospitality
- Transportation, Logistics & Trade

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

Harrisburg Area YMCA

Board member

Greater Harrisburg Association of Realtors

Affiliate Member

Susquehanna Township Baseball Association Youth Baseball

Board member

UCP of Central Pennsylvania

Committee Member

RECOGNITIONS:

- The Best Lawyers in America, Business Organizations (including LLCs and Partnerships) (2025), Real Estate Law (2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026)
- Leadership Harrisburg Area Class of 2005

MEMBERSHIPS:

- Pennsylvania Bar Association
- Dauphin County Bar Association

PRESENTATIONS:

- Moderator - Harrisburg Business Seminar (October 2024)
- Moderator - Harrisburg Business Seminar (October 2023)
- Transportation Logistics & Trade Seminar (March 2023)
 - A Roundtable Discussion on Due Diligence for Real Estate Construction Project - Wake Up with Barley: A Morning on Real Estate (May 2022)
 - Project Financing: When Can I Start Work? - Wake up with Barley: A Morning on Real Estate (June 2018)
 - Key Terms in Commercial Leases and How They Can Hold Up Your Deal - Greater Harrisburg Association of REALTORS Commercial Council (April 2018)

RELATED NEWS:

- Pennsylvania House Bill 1960 Proposes Referendum Requirement for Large Warehouse Projects
May 16, 2025
- Are You Sure Your Property is Tax-Exempt?
December 3, 2021
- Best Lawyers Honors 30 Barley Attorneys
August 25, 2021

RELATED RESOURCES:

- 2022 Wake Up With Barley: A Morning on Real Estate Recording
May 25, 2022