



[Sandra Y. Kellman](#)

**Partner**

**GLOBAL CO-CHAIR, HOSPITALITY AND LEISURE PRACTICE**

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Sandi Kellman concentrates her practice on all aspects of commercial real estate development and finance, with particular focus in the hospitality sector on acquisition, disposition, development, management and financing of hotels and mixed use projects, representing owners and brands in single property and complex multi-state portfolio transactions. Under Sandi's leadership as Global Co-Chair of the Hospitality and Leisure practice, the group has been recognized by *Law360* as "Hospitality Group of the Year" in 2016, 2018 and 2019.

Sandi works on projects throughout the United States and abroad, including projects in the Caribbean and Middle East.

Sandi has been a member of DLA Piper's firmwide Policy Committee and she was a founding chair of DLA Piper's Global Real Estate Summit.

## EXPERIENCE

## MAJOR TRANSACTIONS

- Blackstone Real Estate Group and its affiliates in the acquisition, financing and disposition of more than 100 portfolio and single-asset hotels in 30-plus states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, as well as Jamaica and Brazil, including negotiation of hotel management agreements
- Real estate investor and Treasure Island owner Phil Ruffin in the US\$825 million acquisition of MGM Resorts International's Circus Circus hotel and casino property on the Las Vegas Strip
- Oravel Stays Singapore Pte. Ltd. a/k/a OYO in its formation of a joint venture with Highgate, an industry-leading investor and manager of hospitality assets; subsequent acquisition of the Hooters Casino Hotel Las Vegas through that same joint venture vehicle; and negotiation of a management agreement with Highgate

## RELATED SERVICES

- Real Estate
- Corporate
- Finance
- Projects, Energy and Infrastructure
- Mergers and Acquisitions
- Real Estate Development and Planning
- Real Estate Finance

## RELATED SECTORS

- Energy and Natural Resources
- Real Estate

- The Wm. Wrigley Company, a subsidiary of Mars, Incorporated, in the strategic positioning and disposition of the iconic Wrigley Building in Chicago, along with several other real estate assets
- Several hotel developers in the development of major mixed use projects in the Middle East, including Saudi Arabia, Oman and Dubai
- RNLN Real Estate Advisors, LP in the sale of the Clevelander South Beach Hotel and Essex House, two iconic hotels in the historic Miami Beach Art Deco District and a related bar facility at Miami Marlins Park
- Navy Pier Chicago in the comprehensive redevelopment of this historic site for its 100th anniversary, including a ground lease to construct and operate a new hotel on site
- Blackstone in its acquisition and financing of three hotels and a parking garage in downtown Salt Lake City. The transaction involved franchise agreements with Courtyard by Marriott; Fairfield by Marriott; and Hyatt House; a joint venture; financing; a number of management agreements (including hotel, leasing and parking); liquor licenses; and lease agreements
- A major hotel REIT in the acquisition, historic qualification, entitlements and vertical subdivision of a landmark hotel on Chicago's Michigan Avenue
- A major national developer in structuring ownership and management issues relating to a 90+ story mixed use tower
- A joint venture in redevelopment of an office campus in Washington, DC, leasing of the development and credit tenant financing. The transaction was named "DC Lease of the Year"
- A joint venture purchaser of air rights adjacent to Union Station in Washington, DC, and all necessary easements and other development structuring
- A private equity group in hotel management agreement negotiations with Starwood Hotels for a two-hotel new construction development in Boston
- The purchaser of a city block in historic downtown Charleston, South Carolina, with hotel, restaurant, office and retail components, including acquisition, financing and negotiation of hotel and restaurant management agreements
- The developer of a major luxury mixed use project in downtown Chicago in analyzing and negotiating hotel management agreement proposals

## CREDENTIALS

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### Admissions

- Illinois

### Recognitions

Sandi is ranked Band 2 by *Chambers USA* in the category of Leisure & Hospitality. *Chambers USA* has repeatedly recognized Sandi for her "dynamic practice." Praised as "a fabulous lawyer," she is "practical, pragmatic and effective," and clients have recognized her as a lawyer who "works towards achieving our goal." The directory identified Sandi as "a key figure in the practice [who] receives high praise from clients." One commentator noted she "is extraordinarily experienced and she will get the deal done. If I need someone with creative solutions on complex matters she is terrific." "She represents owners, financiers and brands with equal ease and this breadth of knowledge distinguishes her practice." Clients have recognized this extent and stated, "[s]he's very personable and has so much experience on both sides—she brings this 360 degree perspective on how to go forward. She's responsive and smart—she can see the forest through the trees."

*The Legal 500 United States* has also recommended Sandi. She has been named an Illinois Super Lawyer in Real Estate, as the result of research projects conducted jointly by *Law & Politics* and *Chicago* magazines. Sandi has also been selected as one of *Real Estate Forum's* Women of Influence, and the Leading Lawyer Network has named her among the Top 50 Women Real Estate-Related Lawyers in Illinois.

### Education

- J.D., Northwestern University School of Law

*cum laude*

Note and Comment Editor, *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*

- B.A., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
*with high honors*

## Memberships

- Member, "The Hotel of Tomorrow Project," *Think Tank*
- Member of the *Law360* 2020 Hospitality Editorial Advisory Board
- Sandi is a member of the International Society of Hospitality Consultants

## INSIGHTS

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Sandi writes and speaks frequently on real estate development topics. She is on the planning committee and regularly speaks at the ALIS Hotel Investment Conference, and was on the planning committee and a guest speaker at the 2001 and 2000 UCLA Hotel Industry Investment Conferences. For several years, she has been a guest speaker and panel moderator at the NYU Hotel Conference and the Lodging Conference in Phoenix. Sandi is a guest lecturer at the University of Texas Austin McCombs School of Business.

## Publications

### Hotels and hospitals may find new partnerships to solve for bed capacity issues and vacancies

25 March 2020

The impacts of COVID-19 upon the hospitality sector as well as hospital systems and the healthcare industry have been sudden and dramatic.

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- Hotels and hospitals may find new partnerships to solve for bed capacity issues and vacancies, 25 March 2020
- DLA Piper to provide tax relief input to Congress from businesses impacted by coronavirus, 9 March 2020
- Hospitality market insights: key trends and 2019 forecasts from this year's ALIS conference, 12 Feb 2019

## Events

- Panelist, "Hotel management agreements – what's important for each party," Caribbean Hotel & Resort Investment Summit, Miami, FL, (2016)
- Panelist, "Mixed-Use Development – Best Practices and Success Stories," Americas Lodging Investment Summit (2016)
- Panelist, "When and How Do You Select the Right Development Team?," Americas Lodging Investment Summit (2015)
- Moderator, "The Transactions Outlook – Both An Improving Economy And Improving Hotel Performance, Plus More Active Capital Markets: Does This Mean The Transaction Volume Is Also 'Going Up'? What Is The Outlook For 2014 And What Can We Expect?," Americas Lodging Investment Summit (2014)
- Panelist, "Loan to Own: Navigating Hotel NPL's – Moving from a Shunned Strategy to an Active One," NYU International Hospitality Industry Investment Conference (2012)
- Moderator, "The Transactions Outlook – What Is Trading, Where Are The Deals, How Are They Getting Done? Will 2012 Be A Buyers Or Sellers' Market?," Americas Lodging Investment Summit (2012)

## NEWS

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## MEDIA MENTIONS

- "Hotels In Pandemic Freefall Struggle To Avoid Default," *Law360*, June 12, 2020
- "Someone Says They Caught Coronavirus at Your Hotel: Now What?," *Skift*, May 21, 2020
- "Hotels Adopt New Cleaning Rules During COVID-19 Crisis," *Law360*, May 5, 2020
- "Law360's 2020 Hospitality Editorial Advisory Board," *Law360*, April 6, 2020
- "Why secondary and tertiary hotel markets are pulling ahead," *Hotel Management*, April 2017