

APRIL 26, 2022 | NEWS

As Sarasota Reaches Record Growth, Shumaker Expands Its Team

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Partner Ashley Hodson and Senior Attorney Alicia Lewis Join Shumaker's Sarasota Office

SARASOTA, Fla – As Sarasota experiences a boom in housing, tourism, and population growth, Shumaker is expanding its team to meet the growing need for legal services. [Ashley Hodson](#) is joining the firm as Partner in the Wealth Strategies Service Line and [Alicia Lewis](#) is joining as a Senior Attorney in the Real Estate and Development Service Line.

“With more people choosing to retire in Sarasota, there is a greater demand for wealth planning,” said Partner and Wealth Strategies Regional Service Line Leader Cheryl Gordon. “Ashley has stood out as a top attorney in this field, and we are honored to have her join the firm as Partner. Shumaker is dedicated and committed to having women reach the highest levels of leadership to create stronger, more diverse teams.”

Ashley brings years of experience in complex estate planning, trust and estate administration, and federal income, estate, gift, and generation-skipping transfer tax planning. She also has a background in homestead issues, preparation of federal estate and gift tax returns (Form 706 and 709), IRS audits of federal estate tax returns, fiduciary duties, and post mortem tax planning.

In addition to the growth in wealth planning, Shumaker's Sarasota office is expanding to meet the increased demand in real estate and development projects. Senior Attorney Alicia Lewis will focus on this area.

“We are pleased to welcome Alicia to our growing team to provide the depth of a land use and zoning practice. Alicia works with a wide range of clients seeking to do business both in the private and public sectors and counsel clients on the proper strategies for successful interactions with city and county government agencies and officials. Alicia represents clients before city and county entities on a wide range of issues, including zoning, code enforcement, site plan approvals, subdivisions, variances, and special exceptions, together with land use, comprehensive planning, developments of regional impact, and permitting issues,” said Partner and Real Estate and Development Regional Service Line Leader Jan Pitchford. “We are thrilled to add Alicia's experience to our robust real estate practice.”

Just last month, the median sales price for a single-family home in Sarasota County reached a record high of about \$500,000, according to the Realtor Association of Sarasota and Manatee. There is also a need for affordable housing, as the median rent is \$1,588 a month, which is the [14th most expensive](#) for a mid-size

population in the country. In addition to private real estate, Sarasota is experiencing a commercial boom with new development projects planned near downtown and UTC.

Alicia has spent her career practicing land use, zoning, government procurement, public private partnerships, affordable housing, environmental law, entitlement due diligence, community outreach, and municipal government law. She successfully represents real estate developers and private property owners before federal, state, and local government agencies to secure amendments, rezoning, site plan approvals, platting, variances, special exceptions, and code enforcement matters.