

Cozen O'Connor Brings its Cross-Border Real Estate Practice to Canada, Adding Three Lawyers in Toronto

Monday, January 29, 2024

TORONTO – JANUARY 29, 2024 – Cozen O'Connor is pleased to announce three of Canada's leading real estate lawyers — Enzo Sallese, Steven I. Pearlstein, and Andrea Wong — will join its fast-growing North American Real Estate practice. As the firm's first real estate lawyers to be based in Canada, they come to Cozen O'Connor's Toronto office from Minden Gross LLP. As such, they will reunite with former colleagues Andrew Elbaz, Alexander Katznelson, Zachary Janes, and Michael Shafarenko, corporate lawyers who joined Cozen O'Connor in 2023.

Together, the three bring some 75 years of corporate-level real estate experience, advising and representing commercial and industrial real estate clients in a range of major transactions, including asset acquisition, disposition and financing, commercial and residential real estate development, commercial leasing, loan restructurings, mortgage enforcement and administration, and secured transactions.

"[The new team] is a welcome and important addition. Each will play a key role in helping us secure and serve a growing number of domestic and international clients with business operations in Canada and the United States," said Daniel W. Hardwick, co-chair of Cozen O'Connor's Real Estate practice. "As the first real estate lawyers to be based in Canada, they represent major additions to our cross-border, Chambers & Partners-ranked real estate team. I'm thrilled to welcome them to Cozen O'Connor."

"Enzo, Steven, and Andrea are widely respected real estate lawyers and bring to us well-rounded, comprehensive transactional capabilities," said Shane Hardy, managing partner of the Toronto office. "As part of our decision to become a full-service firm in Canada, we're expanding our corporate real estate capabilities in Canada substantially, and rest assured that will continue."

Sallese, who joins Cozen O'Connor as a shareholder, focuses on banking and financial services, including asset backed lending, loan restructuring, and mortgage enforcement. He also brings to the firm an extensive background handling matters related to general commercial real estate law, including asset acquisitions and dispositions, joint ventures, property development, and commercial leasing. Recognized by Best Lawyers in Real Estate Law for 2024, he is a member of the Law Society of Ontario and the Canadian Bar Association. He earned his LLB Osgoode Hall Law School (York University), an M.A. in Italian language and literature and a B.A. (Hons) in languages at the University of Toronto.

"We're all very excited to be joining Cozen O'Connor and we look forward to once again working alongside our former colleagues," Sallese said. "Whether the client operates in the commercial, industrial, or office building sector, they face substantial real estate challenges in 2024 and beyond. As such, being able to tap Cozen O'Connor's many legal resources — both here and in the United States — will benefit our clients immeasurably."

Pearlstein, who joins as senior counsel, focuses his practice on commercial real estate, banking, and insolvency law. In addition, he brings to the firm a strong business background, having previously served as a managing partner of a Toronto-based law firm and manager of a real estate investment company. With a practice comprising many long-standing clients, he regularly handles asset acquisitions and dispositions, issues related to banking and financing, commercial real estate, and

Related Practice Areas

- Real Estate

insolvency matters, joint ventures, and variances. He earned his J.D. at Osgoode Hall Law School (York University) and is presently on the faculty at the law school as an adjunct professor of law. Pearlstein is a recipient of the Award of Excellence in Real Estate Law from the Ontario Bar Association and a certified specialist in real estate law by the Law Society of Ontario.

Wong, who joins as a member, focuses on all aspects of commercial real estate law, including lending, acquisitions, and the disposition of commercial properties. She routinely represents both lenders and borrowers in challenging commercial real estate financing transactions, leveraging a strong background in commercial mortgages and financing, mortgage remedies, condominium development, commercial agreements and contracts, and acquisitions and dispositions. Fluent in Cantonese and a member of the Law Society of Ontario, Wong earned her J.D. at the University of Windsor, and a B.A. in criminology and sociology at the University of Toronto.

About Cozen O'Connor

Established in 1970, Cozen O'Connor has over 925 attorneys who help clients manage risk and make better business decisions. The firm counsels clients on their most sophisticated legal matters in all areas of the law, including litigation, corporate, and regulatory law. Representing a broad array of leading global corporations and middle market companies, Cozen O'Connor serves its clients' needs through 33 offices across two continents.

###