



Jeffrey D. Harris

Of Counsel



Jeffrey Harris has more than two decades of experience in Ohio's economic development. He is an enthusiastic member of the firm's public finance team, providing counsel to local economic developers, structuring various public finance projects and handling the substantial administrative functions behind levying special assessments and managing Joint Economic Development Districts and New Community Authorities. Jeffrey particularly focuses on economic modeling of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) mechanisms and Enterprise Zone and CRA real property tax abatements.

At the state, county and city levels, Jeffrey held various attorney and non-attorney public service roles. He began his career at the Ohio Department of Development (ODSA), where he spent 10 years managing the State's economic development grant portfolio, its job-creation tax incentives, and its state oversight of local property tax abatements. Jeffrey left state service after holding the title of the agency's interim CFO. Jeffrey then served as the economic development manager and assistant law director for the City of Worthington from 2010–2015.

Immediately prior to joining the Bricker team, Jeffrey was the chief executive officer of the Area Development Foundation (Knox County, Ohio), a county-level nonprofit economic development organization. In this role, he rebuilt the organization's operations and instituted best practice governance, and served as the point-person for all economic development projects in the county.

Appointed as a special prosecutor on behalf of the County Treasurer, Jeffrey prosecuted administrative tax foreclosures in the Knox County Board of Revision. He served as general counsel for the county land bank, handling all property disposal, land bank board governance and Ohio Sunshine Law compliance, and issuing legal opinions.

CONTACT INFORMATION

614.227.4860
jharris@bricker.com

COLUMBUS OFFICE

Bricker & Eckler LLP
100 South Third Street
Columbus, OH 43215-4291

614.227.2300 main
614.227.2390 fax

INDUSTRIES & PRACTICES

Public Finance
Public Sector
Economic Development

Bar Admissions & Activities

- Admitted, State of Ohio, 2003
- Member, Ohio State Bar Association

Education

- The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law (J.D.), 2003
- The Ohio State University, (Master of Public Administration), 2000
- Bowling Green State University (B.A. *cum laude*), 1997; Phi Beta Kappa

Awards & Recognition

- Recipient, Quality of Life Award, Knox County Chamber of Commerce, 2018



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- Member, Inaugural Leadership Academy, Ohio State Bar Association, 2015
- Recipient, Outstanding Volunteer Award, The Central Ohio Chapter of NAIOP, 2014
- Listed, 20 People to Know in Economic Development, *Columbus Business First*, 2013

Presentations & Published Works

- Presenter, "American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA): Impact on Local Governments & Small Businesses," Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce, Toledo, Ohio, April 2021
- Presenter, "Ohio's Enterprise Zone (EZ) Program and Law Webinar," Ohio Economic Development Institute, Columbus, Ohio, April 2021
- Panelist, "Economic Development & Community Development Efforts - Discrepancies Without Differences," Team NEO - Northeast Ohio Development Exchange (NODE), Cleveland, Ohio, March 2021
- Presenter, "County Land Banks: Overview and Future Directions," County Commissioners Association of Ohio, Columbus, Ohio, March 2021
- Presenter, "ROI and Gap Analysis for Economic Development," Ohio Economic Development Institute, Columbus, Ohio, March 2021
- Presenter, "Ohio's Sunshine Laws: Transparency in the Time of COVID," Ohio Municipal League Annual Conference, Columbus, Ohio, November 2020
- Presenter, "Revitalize Blighted Properties with Land Banks," Lorman Live Webinar, November 2020
- Presenter, "CICs on Steroids: County Land Reutilization Corp's under R.C. Chapter 1724," Ohio Economic Development Association, Annual Summit, Columbus, Ohio, September 2020
- Presenter, "Economic Development Financial Incentives: Lessons Learned and Secrets Spilled," K-12 Wednesday Webinar, August 2020
- Presenter, "Revolving Loan Fund Management," Council of Development Finance Agencies, Development Finance Summer School, August 2020
- Presenter, "What to do with your Community's CARES Act - Coronavirus Relief Funds," Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, Columbus, Ohio, July 2020
- Presenter, "Opportunity Zone Technical Assistance Program," Opportunity Appalachia forum, January 2020
- Course instructor, "Intro to Revolving Loan Fund," CDFA Summer School, Detroit, Michigan, August 2019
- Author and editor, Knox County Comprehensive Plan (2018 Update)
- Author, "The Wily Devils Lurking in the Details of Real Property Tax Exemptions," OML Cities and Villages, July/August 2016

Professional & Community Activities

- Development Finance Certified Professional, Council of Development Finance Agencies, 2014



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Experience

Goal-setting for southeastern Ohio communities' short-term development

Advised five local governments in Ohio's Appalachian Region in pursuing near-term economic development goals. Provided plan deliverables to each community, with recommended steps to be taken in expanding broadband access, developing "spec" buildings, financing public improvements, and using one-time American Rescue Plan Act funds for critical infrastructure.

Legal counsel in deploying CARES Act's Coronavirus Relief Fund Payments

Advise regional organizations and political subdivisions in the lawful use of federal Coronavirus Relief Fund Payments, often under rushed deadlines. Provide guidance in local governments' efforts to distribute desperately needed cash during the COVID-19 public health emergency, dispensing advice as to specific expenditures related to particular needs in the communities.

Legal counsel concerning public records and open meetings under Ohio's

Advised an economic development organization's board under the Open Meetings Act, including lawful sharing of information during executive session. Provided legal advice on which records in the organization were public and which could be lawfully withheld from requesters.

General Counsel to county land bank in western Ohio

Advised new county land reutilization corporation (i.e., county land bank) in its formation, including generating and reviewing the entire set of incorporating documents and guiding the proper State filings. Provide general legal counsel to land bank's operations, often in the context of "Can we do this?" questions posed by the client.

Revolving Loan Fund practitioner

Administered all aspects of a county-level economic development loan fund, including originating loans, processing loan applications, and generating the entire set of documents comprising each loan's closing binder.

How-to guidance to local economic developers in accessing State funds

Engaged by multiple regional network partners in Ohio to guide their member economic developers in accessing JobsOhio funding opportunities.