



## James R. Brown

ATTORNEY | GRAND RAPIDS, MI

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The best part of my law practice is helping the people who volunteer and serve their local communities, including township board members, village council members, city commissioners, planning commissioners, zoning board members, and election officials, among others. These are the local leaders who exemplify Michigan's long tradition of strong local government—and it's my honor to analyze issues, solve problems, and advise on how to address challenges.

In my real property law practice, I represent clients in all sorts of real estate transactions, land title issues and property tax matters. I've served for many years on, and have chaired, the State Bar of Michigan committee that writes and publishes the Standards that lawyers and judges rely on to determine the legal status of titles to land. In this voluntary service for our State Bar, I and other committee members have helped to improve the analysis and decision-making of our courts in real property law cases.



### AREAS OF PRACTICE

- General Legal Counsel
- Real Estate
- Public Finance
- Library Law
- Zoning and Land Use Planning
- Property Tax
- Public Utility Systems

### BAR ADMISSIONS

- Michigan, 1965

### EDUCATION

**The University of Michigan Law School**, Ann Arbor, Michigan J.D.  
**Albion College**, Albion, Michigan A.B. Honors: Phi Beta Kappa

### PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS

**Grand Rapids Charter Township Planning Commission** Chairman, 1975–2000  
**Grand Rapids Charter Township Board of Zoning Appeals** Chairman, 1975–1995  
**State Bar of Michigan, Land Title Standards Committee** Chairman, 1995–1998  
**American College of Real Estate Lawyers** Member, Land Use Regulation Committee  
**State Bar of Michigan, Real Property Law Section** Chairman, 1991–1992

**State Bar of Michigan, Real Property Law Section** Council Member, 1984–1992

**Michigan Association of Township Attorneys**

**Michigan Association of Municipal Attorneys**

**National Association of Bond Lawyers**

**Michigan Society of Planning Officials**

**American Planning Association**

## **HONORS AND AWARDS**

- Selected for inclusion in the Best Lawyers in America since 1987, and was named by Best Lawyers as Grand Rapids' 2013 Municipal Lawyer of the Year and as Grand Rapids' 2014 Real Estate Lawyer of the Year
- Selected for inclusion in Grand Rapids Magazine's 2019, 2020 and 2021 Top Lawyers
- Selected for inclusion in Michigan Super Lawyers
- Selected by Michigan Lawyers Weekly as a 2014 Leader in the Law