

DENNIS G. COWAN



Partner

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Dennis G. Cowan is a member of the firm's Real Estate/Transactional and Environment, Energy and Resources Law practice groups.

Mr. Cowan focuses his individual practice primarily on assisting clients in obtaining governmental approvals at the local, county and state levels. He has particular expertise advocating on behalf of clients seeking zoning, site plan and other land use approvals. He also represents clients before state administrative boards and the Michigan Attorney General's office.

In December 2001, Mr. Cowan completed 14 years of service on the Royal Oak City Commission. After six years as a City Commissioner, he was elected and served four consecutive two-year terms (1993-2001) as Royal Oak Mayor. As a result of his extensive experience as a public official, Mr. Cowan offers a unique perspective in advising clients on legal issues related to all levels of government.

In 2004, Mr. Cowan was elected to a two-year term as Chairman of the Oakland County Republican Party. He was re-elected to that post and served through the 2008 election cycle.

Representative Client Work

- Representing state-appointed Emergency Financial Manager on behalf of a southeast Michigan city.
- Coordinated municipal approval efforts of \$350,000,000 hospital project.
- Represented corporate clients during State Attorney General investigation.

Areas of Practice

- Administrative & Regulatory Law
- Banking, Bankruptcy & Creditors' Rights Law
- Election Law
- Environment, Energy and Resources Law
- Government Affairs
- Municipal Law
- Real Estate Law
- Telecommunications Law
- Zoning & Land Use

Honors & Awards

- Martindale-Hubbell's highest rating-AV Preeminent™ Peer Review Rated. AV Preeminent is a certification mark of Reed Elsevier Properties Inc., used in accordance with the Martindale-Hubbell® certification procedures, standards and policies.
- Michigan Super Lawyer in Land Use and Zoning, Michigan Super Lawyers, a Thomson Reuters publication, 2006 - 2011

Education

- Detroit College of Law, magna cum laude, J.D., 1984
- University of Massachusetts/Boston, magna cum laude, B.A., 1978

Bar & Court Admissions

- Michigan, 1984
- U.S. Federal Court, Eastern District of Michigan, 1984

- Represented national gaming operator in Detroit casino bidding process.
- Represented commercial landowners in annexation process and litigation.
- Headed legal team in client effort to stop state-wide ballot proposal.

Professional Affiliations

- Oakland County Bar Association
- State Bar of Michigan (Real Property Law, Corporation and Business Law, and Public Corporations Law sections)
- American Bar Association (Corporate, Banking and Business Law Section)

Public Service

- Chairman, Oakland County Republican Party (2004-2008)
- Michigan Delegate, Republican National Convention (2008)
- State of Michigan Building Authority (2002 – 2006)
(Appointed by Governor Engler, March 2002)
- Member, Attorney General Mike Cox Transition Team (2002)
- Mayor, Royal Oak, 1993 - 2001
- City Commissioner, Royal Oak, 1987 – 1993
Mayor Pro Tem, 1989-1991
Member, Chamber of Commerce Liaison Committee
Member, I-696/Woodward Developer Selection Committee
- Member, Royal Oak Plan Commission, 1993 - 2001
- Chairman, Royal Oak Solid Waste/Recycling Committee (1990-1991)
- Vice Chairman, Woodward Avenue Action Association (1999-2001)
- Member, State of Michigan Site Review Board
(Appointed by Governor Engler, March, 1993)

Community Involvement

- Walsh College Board of Trustees (2009-Present)
- Walsh College Foundation (2004-Present)
- Ticker Club, Inc. – Children's Hospital of Michigan (Board of Directors, 1987)
- Notre Dame High School Alumni Association
- Royal Oak Children's Choir (Board of Directors, 2002-2005)
- Royal Oak Optimist Club
- Royal Oak Youth Assistance Committee
- Royal Oak Shrine High School hockey team volunteer
- Boys' and Girls' Club of South Oakland County (Board of Directors, 1989 - 2001)

- Walsh College Presidents Advisory Council (2002-Present)
- University of Massachusetts Alumni Association
- Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites

Publications, Lectures and Awards

- “Powering your Community’s Future/How to Ensure the Best Utility Infrastructure,” Michigan Municipal League Annual Convention, Dearborn, MI, September, 2002
- “Home Rule for Cities and Senate Bill 653,” Michigan Municipal League Legislative Conference, February 1996
- “Dealing With Governmental Entities in the Buying and Selling of Real Estate,” Homeward Bound Seminar, Real Property Section, State Bar of Michigan, Grand Rapids and Troy, November, 1990

News

- Plunkett Cooney attorneys among Michigan ‘Super Lawyers’ 2011
- Plunkett Cooney attorneys among Michigan ‘Super Lawyers’ 2010
- Cowan elected to Walsh College Board of Trustees
- Plunkett Cooney attorneys among Michigan ‘Super Lawyers’ 2009
- Plunkett Cooney helps build Michigan’s green energy future
- Plunkett Cooney attorneys among Michigan ‘Super Lawyers’ 2008
- Plunkett Cooney Attorneys Named 2007 Michigan ‘Super Lawyers’