



James Speakman

Partner

Commercial Real Estate Law
Capital Markets, Securities, Mergers & Acquisitions
Indigenous Law

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Profile

As a born-and-bred Vancouverite, James is passionate about the development of Vancouver and of British Columbia.

Throughout his life, James has followed closely the transition of metropolitan Vancouver from a "village by the sea," economically based on resource extraction, to one of the most livable cities in the world with a varied economic base.

Ever since he was young, James has been interested in subways and roads, trains and planes, buildings and bridges and how everything works together to support people, goods and business. This passion has formed his career, which has been focused on commercial real estate, both in private business and legal practice, for over 30 years. He was a senior executive in the real estate industry for 10+ years and has practiced law in the real estate sector for 20+ years. In doing so, James has earned a varied and cross-disciplinary experience. This duality allows him to better help our clients, implementing practical and grounded legal solutions that advance their business goals in the transactions and developments that help build our city. This experience has given James the ability to understand the opportunities, priorities and challenges that our clients juggle from the inside.

James was the Managing Partner of Clark Wilson for ten years. During his tenure, James led our team of lawyers in serving our clients and grew the firm in both size and stature. James

also focused on nurturing the firm's culture and promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. His efforts led to Clark Wilson being routinely named one of Canada's Best Workplaces[®]; by the Great Place to Work Institute[®].

Work Highlights

Sunstone Realty Advisors Inc.

- > Established 10 multi-million dollar private real estate funds, which raised nearly \$400 million in syndicated private equity
- > Acted as lead real estate counsel in the acquisition over six years of a portfolio of 58 Canadian real estate properties having an acquisition cost of over \$1 billion, including negotiating purchases, drafting purchase and sale agreements and supervising all matters relating to closing purchase and sale transactions

Pure Industrial Real Estate Trust

- > Counsel in connection with formation of the REIT and its initial public offering in 2007 and subsequent public offerings totaling over \$800 million
- > Real estate counsel in connection with the establishment of its Western Canadian property portfolio valued at over \$500 million
- > PIRET was sold in May, 2018 in a transaction valued at \$3.8 billion

Pure Multi-Family REIT LP

- > Counsel in connection with its initial public offering and subsequent offerings totaling over US\$450 million
- > Former member of the Board of Directors and Audit and Governance Committees
- > Secretary to the Board of Directors

[Additional work highlights below](#)

James enjoys working with people and companies who share his passion.

James has worked to establish and build businesses in BC for over three decades. He is sought by business executives for planning corporate strategies and legal initiatives that impact the business community. He is a member of the British Columbia Business Council Board of Governors and the BCBC / BCAFN Champions Table.

Services

- > Matching equity with real estate
- > Private real estate investment trusts
- > Residential, mixed use and commercial projects
- > Publicly-traded real estate investment trusts
- > Syndicated limited partnerships and mortgages
- > Mortgage trusts
- > Public company debt structures
- > General business advice for entrepreneurial and growing companies
- > Mortgage investment corporations

A life-long British Columbian, James is passionate about the city, the region and the province, their business community and their residents. He brings the same dedication to serving our clients that our clients bring to operating their businesses. He helps companies accomplish their goals so that they can grow, compete and succeed in the markets they serve.

Credentials

Awards & Distinctions

- > Canadian Legal Lexpert Directory®, Repeatedly Recommended Lawyer, Property Leasing, 2023
- > Best Lawyers® in Canada, Commercial Leasing Law, 2022-2025, Private Funds Law, 2023-2025, and Real Estate Law, 2019-2025
- > Canadian Legal Lexpert Directory®, Repeatedly Recommended, 2020
- > Business In Vancouver, BC's Most Influential Business Leaders (BC500), 2021-2023

Industry Involvement

- > Canadian Chamber of Commerce, Western Executive Council, Member
- > Business Council of British Columbia, Board of Governors and BCBC/BCAFN Champions Table
- > Pure Multi-Family REIT LP, Director, 2014-2018; member of Audit and Nominating and Governance Committees
- > NAIOP National Association of Office and Industrial Properties, Vancouver, board member and Government Relations Committee Chair, 2001-2003
- > Institute of Corporate Directors, member
- > Canadian Bar Association, 1986-present

Community Commitments

- > British Columbia Women's Health Foundation, Board of Directors, 2019-present
- > United Way of the Lower Mainland's Major Gift Council, member (2017)
- > District of North Vancouver Advisory Planning Commission, 1994-1996
- > Delbrook Basketball Association, Former President, Board Member and coach, 1998-2004
- > Forest Hills Soccer Club, soccer coach, 1993-1998

Education & Call to Bar

- > ICD.D, Institute of Corporate Directors, Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto, 2017
- > Call to Bar: British Columbia, 1986
- > Bachelor of Laws, University of British Columbia, 1985

Additional Work Highlights

Anthem Properties Inc.

- > Lead counsel in respect of its purchase, with an undisclosed Canadian institutional investor, of Grandview Properties Park in Vancouver
- > Counsel in the purchase of a 10 acre site in Surrey, BC for \$62.5 million
- > Counsel in the acquisition of Calgary-based United Communities, a leading residential land developer, for \$200 million

GMC Projects Inc.

- > Development of a 110,000 square foot two phase office development in Victoria, BC

Private Vancouver real estate investment group

- > Counsel in sale of multi-family rental property for \$73 million

Private Vancouver real estate developer

- > Development of a mixed-use, two building 213 unit residential project with 30,000 square feet of commercial space in Vancouver

Private Vancouver real estate developer

- > Development of a mixed-use, two tower 500 unit residential project with 250,000 square feet of commercial space in several air space parcels in Burnaby

Private Vancouver real estate investment group

- > Acquisition of a 216 unit strata unit, short-stay residence for \$17 million

Private Vancouver real estate developer

- > Development of an urban, mixed-use high-rise residential and commercial project with 96 residential units and a car dealership

Private mortgage investment corporation

- > Counsel to private mortgage investment corporation with equity in excess of \$30 million

Various private entities

- > Raising equity through offering memoranda in limited partnerships, RRSP-eligible bonds or syndicated mortgage structures for several dozen different private clients for real estate investment and development projects

Private mortgage investment manager

- > Creation and offering under offering memorandum of two private mortgage trusts

Anthem Properties Inc. (business experience)

- > Served as senior business executive for seven years from start-up to public listing
- > Actively participated in the structuring, marketing and sale of \$100 million in syndicated private equity and the completion of a public listing on the TSX with an associated \$35 million private placement and the issuance of \$36 million in equity on the initial IPO
- > Actively participated in the acquisition of a \$500 million portfolio of real estate in Canada and the United States, including negotiating letters of intent, drafting purchase and sale agreements and overseeing counsel in completing all matters relating to closing

Pennyfarthing Development Corp. (business experience)

- > Served as Executive Vice President of privately-held real estate development company for four years
Development, financing and construction of a 145-unit, high-rise luxury, full-service retirement community in San Diego, California
- > Ownership, operation and on-site management of a 120-unit, high-rise luxury, full-service retirement community in Bellevue, Washington
- > Developed two wood-frame townhouse projects in suburban Vancouver, totaling 160 residential units
- > Consolidated lands for the development of a 40 lot subdivision in Surrey, BC and completed the subdivision and sale of such lots

Prospero International Realty and its partners

- > Acquisition of the Thunderbird and Westport Marinas