



William L. Rasmussen

Partner

☎ 503.205.2308 📍 Portland Office
✉ william.rasmussen@millernash.com

“My favorite projects involve doing what others say is impossible. I use close collaboration with our clients, a deep knowledge of their industries, and a focus on their end goal to help develop and implement creative, real-world solutions to difficult problems.”

William L. Rasmussen practices Oregon administrative law with concentrations in land use, real estate, and regulatory matters. He represents clients in complex proceedings involving state and local governmental bodies.

Will is skilled at guiding projects to completion through the nuanced interplay of federal, state, and local laws and politics. Will has extensive experience in managing applications to change state and local laws, as well as successfully obtaining approval to develop large or complex parcels. Will has obtained countless approvals for development in the Portland metro area, along the Oregon coast, and in many other Oregon cities and counties. He has successfully defended a wide variety of approvals and overturned land use ordinances at the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals.

Additionally, Will has developed extensive experience in several related areas of administrative law, such as Oregon public records laws and Oregon Liquor and Cannabis Commission regulations. He has represented clients in a diversity of permitting, enforcement, and appeal matters before City of Portland bureaus and offices, including the Bureau of Development Services, Bureau of Environmental Service, Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, Bureau of Revenue, Bureau of Transportation, Housing Bureau, Water Bureau, Hearings Office, Revenue Office, and City Council.

Will approaches his clients’ projects with a goal-oriented approach that he developed during his time in the business sector. Prior to his law career, Will was an adviser with UBS. He also interned with U.S. Senator Ron Wyden and remains involved with civic affairs in Oregon through the Portland Metro Chamber, Oregon Business & Industry, and Oregon State Bar. He has been selected by his peers for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America*[®]—the oldest peer-reviewed publication in the legal profession. He is also the past chair of the firm’s recruiting and partnership committees.

Education

J.D., University of Washington School of Law, 2006

- Moot Court Honor Board

B.A., University of Washington, business administration, minors in political science and art history, 2002

Bar Admissions

Oregon, 2006

Professional Activities

- Portland Metro Chamber
 - Board Chair Elect, 2024-present
 - Board Executive Committee, 2019-present
 - Government Relations Executive Committee, Chair, 2019-2021
- Multnomah Bar Association, Member
- Oregon State Bar
 - Real Estate and Land Use Section Executive Committee, Chair, 2024-present; Member, 2016-present
 - Land Use Legislative Committee, Chair, 2016-present
- Oregon Business & Industry
 - Member, 2012-present
 - Good Government Committee, Chair, 2010-2012
- Oregon Liquor Control Commission
 - Marijuana Advisory Committee, Member, 2020-present

Civic Activities

- Morrison Child & Family Services
 - Board Chair, 2018-2020
 - Board Executive Committee, 2016-2022
- University of Washington Alumni Association (UWAA), Portland Chapter
 - Board Member, 2006-2020
 - Past President, 2007-2010
- University of Washington Board of Regents, Member, 2005-2006
- Oregon Sports Authority, Education Committee, 2009-2011

Representative Experience

Administrative Law

- **Oregon Administrative Law Counsel.** Represented clients in a diversity of matters before Oregon administrative agencies, including the Oregon Agriculture Department, Construction Contractors Board, Department of Administrative Services, Department of Energy, Department of Environmental Quality, Department of Geology and Mineral Industries, Department of Land Conservation and Development, Department of Transportation, Environmental Quality Commission, Forestry Department, Land Use Board of Appeals, Liquor Control Commission, Office of Administrative Hearings, Parks and Recreation Department, State Athletic Commission, State Lottery, and Water Resources Department.
- **Portland Administrative Law Counsel.** Represented clients in a diversity of permitting, enforcement, and appeal matters before City of Portland bureaus and offices, including the Bureau of Development Services, Bureau of Environmental Service, Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, Bureau of Revenue, Bureau of Transportation, Housing Bureau, Water Bureau, Hearings Office, Revenue Office, and City Council.
- **Lottery Enforcement Response.** Respond to enforcement actions by the Oregon State Lottery, including appeal and negotiation with Oregon State Lottery to obtain withdrawal of lottery retailer contract termination order.
- **Lottery Licensing.** Obtained lottery retailer contract approval at sensitive Oregon State Lottery retail locations.
- **OLCC Enforcement Response.** Appeal alleged violations of Oregon Liquor Control Commission rules and, when appropriate, obtain dismissal of alleged violations, including allegations of permitting unlawful activity.
- **OLCC Licensing.** Obtained liquor license for retail establishments in sensitive locations and appeal proposed restrictions on liquor licenses.

- **Public Records Counsel.** Successfully compelled production of public records and blocked the release of confidential records requested under Oregon’s public records laws. Represented clients at all levels of public records disputes, including within the custodian public body, before the district attorney and attorney general, and in court. Developed deep knowledge of Oregon public records laws and strategies to encourage or discourage the release of records.

Land Use

- **Coastal Development.** Obtained the first ever Oregon Statewide Planning Goal 18 exception to place ocean-front protective structures to prevent catastrophic loss of prominent resort from erosion.
- **Revetment Permitting.** Successfully obtained permits from local jurisdictions and the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department to place ocean-front protective structures to prevent coastal erosion in front of resorts, commercial properties, and oceanfront homes.
- **Zoning and Comprehensive Plan Change Applications.** Managed applications to change zoning and comprehensive plan designations, and for development of large parcels inside Metro Urban Growth Boundary.
- **Residential Land Development.** Obtained permits for and successfully defended application for residential development in Portland, Beaverton, Tigard, Hillsboro, Lake Oswego, West Linn, Cannon Beach, Bend, and many other Oregon cities and counties. Successfully defended approvals at the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals.
- **Land Use Appeals.** Represented public and private parties in appeals before local hearings officers, elected officials, and the Land Use Board of Appeals.
- **Land Use Permitting.** Obtained conditional use, subdivision, partition, property-line adjustment, variance, master plan, development agreement, and other land use approvals to meet client goals for development projects.
- **Aquatic Habitat Restoration Counsel.** Advised Northwest tribes on real estate, land use, and regulatory requirements to breach federally permitted dikes and allow tidal inundation of lands to facilitate salmon habitat restoration.
- **Rural Development.** Obtained statewide planning goal exception, zoning map amendment, and comprehensive plan map amendment to facilitate industrial development on rural land.
- **Complex Development Due Diligence.** Assessed feasibility of obtaining all local, state, and federal permits necessary to develop multibillion-dollar energy facility, including timeline for permitting sequence and assessment of risk of denial for key project components.
- **Transportation Development.** Advise Portland’s regional transportation agency on infrastructure permitting and condemnation.

Energy

- **Fuel Distribution Counsel.** Ongoing counsel to primary fuel suppliers of the Pacific Northwest on local and state legislative matters.
- **Energy Permitting.** Obtain local approvals to expand infrastructure for traditional energy companies.
- **Legislative Appeals.** Twice successfully appealed City of Portland ordinances targeting fuel infrastructure projects, invalidating the ordinances.
- **Renewable Energy Development.** Prepared easements and address land use issues for wind and solar development projects.
- **Wave-Energy Counsel.** Counseled nonprofit with the mission of promoting wave energy in Oregon to help streamline the process for siting wave-energy projects in Oregon.

Cannabis & Marijuana

- **Cannabis Counsel.** Provided ongoing counsel to the leading cannabis retail, production, and processing companies, including delivery of positive outcomes for business transaction, real estate, litigation, regulatory, and enforcement issues.
- **Cannabis Real Estate Services.** Performs real estate and land use due diligence for cannabis-related clients to assess the suitability of a potential site for clients' purposes and for conformance with applicable regulations.
- **Cannabis Policy Leadership.** Spearhead industry initiatives for clients with state and local policy leaders to develop rule changes friendly to fast growing cannabis companies.
- **Cannabis Enforcement Response.** Represent cannabis clients in defending against OLCC enforcement actions. Successfully prevented numerous license cancellations for clients.

Real Estate

- **Complex Lease Agreements.** Represented landlords and occasionally tenants in drafting and negotiating lease agreements for multifamily, office, retail, industrial, farm, and raw land properties.
- **Complex Easement Drafting.** Prepared easements to address client access, maintenance, utility, and use needs.
- **Complex Real Estate Transactions.** Structure purchase and sale agreements for development land, partially entitled land, and unique real estate subject to site-specific government approvals.
- **Real Estate Acquisition and Redevelopment.** Assisted nonprofit client with hotel acquisition and redevelopment into transitional housing, including all aspects of due diligence and collaboration with their funding partner.

Publications

- "Oregon County Adopts Historic Goal Exception Allowing Beachfront Protective Structures," Miller Nash, *From the Ground Up*, coauthor (Dec. 2021)
- "COVID-19: Cannabis Industry Resources," Miller Nash Graham & Dunn, coauthor (Mar. 2020)

Presentations

- "The Year in Review," City Club of Portland, Friday Forum (Dec. 2019)
- "Oregon State Bar Land Use Legislative Update," Oregon State Bar, RELU Annual Summer Conference (Aug. 2019)
- "Oregon State Bar Land Use Legislative Update," Oregon State Bar, RELU Annual Summer Conference (Aug. 2018)
- "Oregon State Bar Land Use Legislative Update," Oregon State Bar, RELU Annual Summer Conference (Aug. 2017)

Recognition & Honors

- Selected for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America*[®] (Portland, OR)
 - Land Use and Zoning Law, 2020-present
- Selected for inclusion as an Oregon Super Lawyer—Rising Star, 2008-2009 and 2011-2013
- Recipient, Portland Chamber of Commerce Chair's Award for Public Service, 1998

Personal Activities

Will stays busy between family, work, and community. Most of his free time is dedicated to his wife, Kathryn, young daughters Grace and Lottie, and Dobermans Alfred, Aspen, and Izzy. Will enjoys being engaged with civic affairs and playing board games with friends. He lives on five acres outside of town and relishes the opportunity to use his 32-inch chainsaw after big storms.