HUSCH BLACKWELL



Michael J. Kelly

SENIOR COUNSEL

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OVERVIEW

With a passion for civic engagement and community development, Mike represents clients in real estate matters.

Mike's practice encompasses real estate litigation, contract preparation, and general corporate counsel services. He regularly represents both contractors and landowners in allegations of construction defect or breach of contract, land disputes, partition actions, eminent domain cases, and other litigation matters that arise between landowners, contractors, and public authorities. Known as a truly zealous advocate, Mike understands how critical cases are to clients, and he invests personally in each matter he litigates.

Mike also works with manufacturers, contractors, and building suppliers in general corporate matters, often serving as a company's sole outside counsel and first point of legal contact. His goal is to help these clients avoid litigation, and his background as a litigator gives him a sharp eye for potential problems. He aims to draft contracts that provide solid protection and allow for breachless execution, and he has authored publications and provided trainings and presentations on well-constructed contracts.

After beginning his legal career in general commercial litigation, Mike realized that his favorite cases were those in the real estate sector, thanks to their tangible results. He has focused on the industry since 2016 and still finds it deeply rewarding to see a project come to life in the community on the other side of litigation. He also values the opportunity to work with engineers, architects,

Industry

Real Estate, Development, & Construction

Services

Commercial Litigation
Construction & Design
Construction Litigation
Corporate Real Estate
Litigation & Alternative Dispute Resolution

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and other professionals of such high caliber, and he loves supporting people who seek to invest in their communities.

Mike's enthusiasm for community development goes beyond his work as an attorney: he has previously served as mayor of Roeland Park, Kansas, and currently serves as chair of Johnson County, Kansas, both in the greater Kansas City area. A lifelong resident of the area, Mike is also a member of the boards of directors of the Greater Kansas City Chamber and the Kansas City 2026 World Cup. His civic roles have given him unique knowledge of the inner workings of public authorities, and he draws on his municipal government experience to guide clients around common pain points and find opportunities for expedition. Mike's civic involvement also makes him especially good at identifying trends that impact business across the metropolitan region. An active collaborator, he routinely works at all levels of government to move matters forward.

Experience

- Obtained summary judgment on behalf of engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) contractor client facing $35 million subcontractor injury suit.
- Defended and resolved multiple litigation disputes on behalf of geotechnical engineer following commercial building settlement and flooding.
- Obtained summary judgment on behalf of railroad in Federal Employers Liability Act (FELA) suit.

Recognition

- *Ingram's*, 40 Under Forty, 2023
- Ross T. Roberts Trial Academy, 2014
- *Missouri & Kansas Super Lawyers*, Civil Litigation: Defense, Rising Star, 2021-2025

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Education

- J.D., University of Kansas School of Law
  - Advocacy Certificate
  - Kansas Association for Justice (KsAJ), Advocacy Award
  - Jessup International Moot Court Team, Paul E. Wilson Project for Innocence
- B.A., Kansas State University
  - Electronic Journalism major; Political Science and Leadership Studies minors
  - Outstanding Public Speaker award
  - Phi Delta Theta, president
  - *Collegian*, multimedia editor

Admissions

- Missouri
- Kansas
- U.S. District Court, Western District of Missouri
- U.S. District Court, District of Kansas

Community Leadership

A former mayor of Roeland Park, Kansas, Mike currently serves as chair of Johnson County, Kansas' largest county. He is a member of the boards of directors of the Greater Kansas City Chamber and the Kansas City 2026 World Cup.

Mike also co-founded and leads Climate Action KC. The group of 100 elected officials from Northeast Kansas and Northwest Missouri – along with private and nonprofit sector collaborators – work to implement proactive policy and practices that improve climate resilience and generate corresponding economic, social, and public health benefits for the region.

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