

MartinTate
ATTORNEYS & COUNSELORS

OF COUNSEL

Paul Morris

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BIOGRAPHY

Paul Morris is an experienced attorney, business owner, and civic leader. Having served as both outside legal counsel and a chief executive officer, he brings to his law practice a practical, business-oriented perspective informed by firsthand experience on both sides of the attorney-client relationship. Paul particularly enjoys serving as a trusted legal adviser to business owners and executives, helping them navigate transactions, resolve disputes, work with local government, and address the wide range of legal issues that arise in operating a business.

Paul rejoined Martin Tate in 2026 after a career in private business and public service. He initially joined Martin Tate in 2003 as an associate and later became a director and shareholder of the firm. His earlier legal practice included complex federal court litigation, particularly commercial and intellectual property disputes, and service as outside general counsel to small businesses.

Before joining Martin Tate in 2003, Paul practiced law with O'Melveny & Myers in New York City and clerked twice for Judge Julia Gibbons, first on the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Tennessee and later on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit.

After his initial tenure with Martin Tate, Paul served as President and CEO of the Downtown Memphis Commission, where he led efforts to redevelop Downtown Memphis through public-private partnerships and economic incentives, including payment-in-lieu-of-taxes (PILOT) agreements. His work included facilitating the redevelopment of One Commerce Square, The Chisca, the James Lee House, and the Tennessee Brewery. He also managed the Beale Street Entertainment District and directed the $40 million Main-to-Main Big River Crossing project.

Following his public sector work, Paul served as President of Jack Morris Auto Glass, overseeing the family-owned company's ten locations and approximately 100 employees. He led the company through a period of rapid growth, nearly doubling sales, before negotiating its sale to Driven Brands, a publicly traded company.

Paul has advised several mayors of Memphis and Shelby County on structuring their administrations, managing projects, and negotiating transactions. He currently chairs the board of The Works, Inc., Memphis's largest community development corporation, and he has chaired several other local nonprofit boards, including Memphis Area Legal Services and Grace-St. Luke's Episcopal School. He has also served on the boards of Regional One Health and the Memphis & Shelby County Crime Commission.

PRACTICE AREAS

Business Transactions
Commercial Real Estate
Economic Development
Intellectual Property
Litigation

EDUCATION

Vanderbilt University School of Engineering, B.E., 1996, magna cum laude, Civil Engineering with a minor in Political Philosophy

Vanderbilt University School of Law, J.D., 1999, Associate Editor, Vanderbilt Law Review

BAR ADMISSIONS

Tennessee, 1999

New York, 2001