

MICHIGAN LANDLORD

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Bill Would Require Disclosure of Lead Lines; City of Grand Rapids Paying to Replace Water Lines

**Landlord Liability—Snow
and Ice: Tenant Slips and
Falls on Snow and Ice,
Then Sues Landlord for
His Injuries**

**Property Taxes Levied
on Single Family Homes
Increased 4% in 2018**



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: Brian Hamrick

Hamrick Investment Group

From the silver screen to syndication...this RPOA member has made quite the jump into real estate investing, leaving what he called a dream job: working on blockbuster movie trailers in Hollywood. In this quarter's member spotlight, we'll get to know how Brian Hamrick made the transition out of Tinseltown and into real estate investing.

Brian started out in the movie marketing sector where he produced, edited, wrote copy and cut trailers for feature films such as 8 Mile, Remember the Titans, The Hangover and many others. He did this for 20 years and loved it, but, as with many things in life, things change and it was eventually time to move on.

After listening to the audiobook of Robert Kiyosaki's Rich Dad Poor Dad and looking for a way to make some passive income, adding more flexibility to his schedule and freeing up more time to spend with his family, Brian got excited about the idea of investing in real estate.

Since the market was too expensive to invest in L.A., he decided to invest in out of state properties through a network of investors that were investing in real estate all over the country. He picked up seven buy and hold properties in various parts of the U.S., mostly single family residences, which he owned for 10+ years.

He eventually ended up selling all seven of those properties. At the time he was a new investor and admittedly didn't run his numbers properly. Unexpected maintenance and repairs, increases in property taxes, unreliable property management companies, etc. caused the properties that cash flowed on paper to only break even.

He also ran into a handful of nightmarish experiences along the way, including a suspected meth house he owned in New Mexico, for which he almost ended up having to shell out nearly \$20,000 to a remediation company. His biggest mistake, however, was purchasing a condo as a senior hotel rehab project for \$32,000. The property ended up full of low-quality residents and an abundance of drug activity... he was able to eventually dump it for a mere \$2,000—ouch! All of these mishaps added up to be a great learning experience.

Ultimately, he decided that multi-family was the better way for him to go.

In 2005, he and his wife moved to Grand Rapids and saw that the city had a lot of potential. Instead of investing right away, Brian waited a few years because he could tell the real estate bubble was going to burst...and as we all now know, he was right.

Brian has acquired many properties since then, the first of which being a 12-unit built in 1870 by a Civil War veteran. He currently owns 370 residential units in Grand Rapids and Wyoming. His company, Hamrick Investment Group, focuses on syndicating large apartment communities—essentially pooling together large investments to purchase large apartment communities. Brian is also invested in self-storage, non-performing notes and is a silent partner in an office building investment.

One of his favorite investments is The Oakwood—a 7-story, 96-unit apartment complex that features a Chicago-style courtyard, fitness center, office space and very popular restaurant, The Commons. When they first acquired the property in 2015, it was in pretty rough shape—dated and undermanaged. They redid the landscaping around the property and updated the interior and lighting, making the building, built in 1920, a star in the historic Heritage Hill neighborhood.

Brian hosts the RPOA's Rental Property Owner & Real Estate Investor podcast, which has over 575,000 listens to date (wow!) and is growing every day. Brian has always loved podcasts and with his real estate investing experience and production background, he was the perfect fit. One of Brian's favorite episodes was one that recently aired (episode 168). It was a live mastermind session where Brian and two guests helped an investor that Brian met at RPOA's annual conference find and fix what was wrong with his business model. The session helped the investor improve the systems he had in place and boost profits for his Detroit-based investing business.

For the past 10+ years, Brian has also volunteered for various RPOA committees and sits on the Board of Directors. He served as President of the RPOA in 2018 and received the RPOA Outstanding Volunteer Award in 2016. His advice for those just getting their start investing in real estate is to join an organization where you can network with like-minded people. He stresses that being a part of a supportive community where you can bounce ideas off of others and ask for help is invaluable. And don't just join... get involved—join a committee and be active to help make the community better.

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