



Chief Assistant City Attorney

(and other Legal Positions)



Recruitment Services Provided By Ralph Andersen & Associates

An Outstanding Opportunity

The City of Vancouver, a vibrant and growing full-service municipality, is seeking a seasoned litigator and legal strategist to serve as its next Chief Assistant City Attorney. Broad range of legal matters include land use, shoreline management, environmental law, civil rights (including public safety matters), employment law, housing, planning, transportation, emergency services, and emergency medical response (provided via contract). The Chief Assistant City Attorney serves as the Civil Division Chief and is first in succession to the City Attorney in his absence. The Chief Assistant City Attorney may be called upon to litigate a wide variety of complex civil legal matters and provide advice to departments within the City while also providing day-to-day oversight to a small in-house legal team. The ideal candidate will thrive in a fast-paced environment and have the ability to address complex issues in a commonsense manner with a sense of urgency. Unquestionable personal integrity, strong ethics, candor, and diplomacy are required. A collaborative leadership style, a solution-oriented approach to problem solving, resilience to pressure, and a good sense of humor are considered vital for success in this role.

Additional Opportunities to Join the City Attorney's Office: A second and potential third recruitment may also be drawn from this pool of applicants dealing primarily in real estate and land use. Candidates with this specific real estate/land use experience are strongly encouraged to apply for this second opportunity to join the City of Vancouver. Interested candidates should tailor their second submittal to the necessary legal experience. Ralph Andersen & Associates in collaboration with the City Attorney, Mr. Jonathan Young, reserve the right to approach all applicants to consider one or both positions as part of this highly competitive process based on overall career history and areas of legal expertise.

cityofvancouver.us

The City of Vancouver

With a population of over 180,000 residents, Vancouver, Washington sits on the north bank of the Columbia River directly across from Portland, Oregon. The Pacific Coast is less than 90 miles to the west and the Cascade Mountain Range rises on the east. Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument and Mt. Hood are less than two hours away while the spectacular Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area lies 30 minutes to the east. Vancouver combines the excitement of a major metropolitan area with small-town charm and abundant recreational opportunities. Vancouver enjoys mild weather with less average annual rainfall than cities like Boston, Washington, D.C., or Atlanta. Its seasons are distinct and summer temperatures generally climb into the 80s while winter nights rarely fall below 30 degrees. This moderate climate creates lush forests and abundant foliage. The Columbia River is a central feature of the local environment as it connects and sustains the community. The river provides fantastic recreational opportunities and helps nurture wildlife, evergreen forests, agriculture, neighborhoods, and businesses. The 7.3-acre Vancouver Waterfront Park is a central component of a 32-acre, high density, mixed-use urban development called The Waterfront Vancouver. This community park incorporates public open spaces with the Columbia River and the Columbia River Renaissance Trail connects Vancouver Waterfront Park to Wintler Park, over 5 miles away. Other economic drivers in the community include common industries such as healthcare and education (with Washington State University - Vancouver and Clark College) as well as unique business operations like Banfield Pet Hospital, Papa Murphy's Pizza, StairMaster, and Nautilus.



Recognition and Awards

2020 Top 100 Best Places To Live - *Livability.com*

No. 1 Farmers Market in the state of Washington – *American Farmland Trust 2020*

Top Ten Best Cities for Camping – *Apartments.com 2020*

Governor's Smart Communities "Smart Choices" Award, *City Housing Strategy – 2019*

American Public Works Association Award for Public Works Excellence, *Grant Street Pier-- 2019*

American Council of Engineering Companies of Washington, Project of the Year, *Vancouver Waterfront Park – 2019*

American Council of Engineering Companies of Oregon, Project of the Year, *Vancouver Waterfront Park – 2019*

Oregon Chapter American Concrete & Aggregate Producers Association, Excellence in Concrete – *Vancouver Waterfront Park – 2019*

Washington Recreation & Park Association, Facilities & Parks Spotlight Award for Outdoor Space, *Vancouver Waterfront Park – 2019*

NUSA Best Neighborhood Program Award, *Social Revitalization/ Neighborliness, Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program – 2019*

Game Changers award from Vancouver's Downtown Association, *City of Vancouver Waterfront - 2019*

3CMA Award of Excellence: *Real Vancouver - 2018*



Responsibilities of the Chief Assistant City Attorney

This at-will exempt position is under general direction of the City Attorney. The Chief Assistant City Attorney is responsible for ensuring the effective presentation of the City's legal position in all Civil litigation and ensures the delivery of appropriate legal advice and representation of the City and its directors, managers, and employees. Directly supervise attorneys and support staff within the Civil Division of the City Attorney's Office. Current authorized staffing includes six Assistant City Attorney III and two Legal Assistants. Additionally, the Chief Assistant collaborates with external attorneys for the provision of contract attorney services and approves related expenditures.



Key responsibilities include:

- Collaborate with the City Attorney and director(s) of their assigned department(s) to identify/affirm a shared understanding of client goals, objectives, and risk tolerances. Represent and advise clients on a broad range of municipal legal matters in advancement of such goals.
- Supervise Assistant City Attorneys and Legal Assistants assigned to the Civil Division and ensure that their legal representation and advice to clients are rendered in a manner consistent with department standards on a broad range of municipal legal matters.
- Evaluate civil attorneys' performance, provide performance feedback, and provide facilitative leadership, coaching, counseling, and discipline on an as-needed basis.
- Work collaboratively with City Attorney to ensure that the department maintains a reputation of professional excellence.
- Attend meetings of City Council, boards, and commissions to provide legal advice and representation.
- Provide written and oral advice to City departments and employees on legal matters including potential litigation risks and legal questions pertaining to their respective powers, duties, functions, and obligations.
- Draft contracts, ordinances, resolutions, policies, procedures, rules, regulations, memoranda, correspondence, and other legal documents.
- Study and interpret laws, court decisions, ordinances, and other legal authorities.
- Prepare pleadings and handle depositions, interrogatories, pretrial motions, hearings, trials, appeals, settlement conferences and other legal matters in representation of the City, its officials, directors, managers, employees, boards, commissions, and volunteers when needed.

The Ideal Candidate

The ideal candidate will be an experienced legal professional who provides legal advice, support, and counsel to this municipal organization including the City Attorney and various departments on an array of activities and policy initiatives. The Chief Assistant City Attorney also supports and provides legal guidance to various committees that meet frequently. On occasion, the Chief Assistant City Attorney may confer with outside legal counsel that provide legal advice and counsel to the legislative body, the City Council.

Additionally, this legal strategist will have a track record of success in managing a small legal office. The Chief Assistant City Attorney will also have exceptional communication and interpersonal skills and thrive in a dynamic, fast-paced, and high-performance organization. The Chief Assistant City Attorney will have a collaborative style that supports transparency, innovation, and timely response. The top candidate will demonstrate the ability to craft simple solutions that allow the City Attorney and City of Vancouver's Leadership to move initiatives forward.

In support of the City Attorney and the overall mission of the City Attorney's Office, the Chief Assistant City Attorney will be an inclusive and thoughtful legal advisor who listens first, seeks input, and then consistently presents legal options for consideration, allowing for a thorough analysis of all aspects of an issue. With broad legal experience, the ideal candidate will be able to evaluate controversial situations and present options in a clear and concise fashion. Other personal attributes include being approachable and having a can-do attitude and customer service approach.

Personal traits and characteristics desired in the Chief Assistant City Attorney include:

- **Confident and engaging professional** with outstanding communication, interpersonal, and leadership skills with a passion for public service and strong work ethic.
- Embrace the **core values of integrity, honesty, and leading by example.**
- A strategic and forward-thinking legal advisor who can **operate at a high-level yet is very involved in providing advice and counsel on operational issues.**
- A leader who **embraces equity, diversity, and inclusion** in the workplace.
- Ability to guide the legal affairs of the City Attorney's Office successfully and efficiently in direct support of the City Attorney.

Qualifying Experience and Education

Experience: Six or more years of professional legal experience as an attorney with an emphasis on litigation and one or more of the following areas: municipal law, land use, community & economic development, public utilities, construction, contracts, public procurement, privacy, public records, information technology (IP law), tax, bankruptcy, corporate law, labor, employment, real estate, torts, constitutional law, and/or code compliance. Prior supervisory experience or demonstrated leadership experience is preferred.

Top Contenders will have the knowledge, skills, and ability to:

- Provide collaborative leadership to a team of highly skilled legal professionals while demonstrating emotional intelligence, compassion, and conviction;
- Perform a complete range of civil legal work and present cases before any court within the State of Washington, U.S. District Court, and Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals;
- Present facts, arguments, and laws clearly and logically in written and oral form in business, administrative, and courtroom settings;
- Analyze exceptionally complex legal problems and arguments, conduct legal research, draft ordinances, contracts, and other legal instruments, including pleadings and briefs;
- Research, analyze, and evaluate new service delivery methods, procedures, and techniques;
- Analyze problems, identify practical solutions, project consequences of proposed actions, and implement recommendations in support of Civil Division goals and objectives;
- Work in a fast-paced, professional office environment while balancing multiple projects and deadlines; and
- Establish and maintain cooperative working relationships with those contacted during business, including other municipal organizations, government officials, community groups, and the public.

Education: Equivalent to a Juris Doctorate from an accredited law school.

License: License and membership in good standing in the Washington State Bar Association (or qualify for Admission by Motion under APR 3(c)(1) and ability to obtain WSBA membership within 12 months of hire). Selected candidate must be admitted to, or eligible for admission to U.S. District Court and the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

All highly qualified candidates that meet the above noted requirements including licensure, are strongly encouraged to apply for this outstanding opportunity. Specific legal experience dealing in the broad areas of the law as expanded earlier in this brochure and will be a plus for top candidates.

Compensation and Benefits

The budgeted annual salary range for the Chief Assistant City Attorney position is \$139,584 to \$181,488. The mid-point of this range is \$160,536. The entry point for new hires is based upon qualifications, experience, and internal equity. The City **does** participate in Social Security.

Interested candidates from out-of-state should be aware that there is no personal state income tax in the state of Washington.

Additionally, the City of Vancouver offers the following benefits:

- Medical, Vision, Prescription, and Dental Insurance
- Personal Time Off and Paid Holidays
- Washington State PERS Retirement System (stable and well-funded)
- Annual payment of Washington State Bar membership dues and adequate continuing legal education opportunities to meeting MCLE compliance requirements
- Other benefits such as life and disability insurance



Interested in the Real Estate / Land Use Opportunity? Candidates with specific real estate/land use experience are strongly encouraged to also apply for this second opportunity to join the City of Vancouver. Interested candidates should tailor their second submittal to the necessary legal experience and elaborate further on real estate and land use experience. Salary range for this position is \$119,760 to \$155,652 with a mid-point of the range being \$137,706 for the classification of Assistant City Attorney III.

Email submittals (subject line) and cover letters should clearly designate interest in this second position. Submittal on both positions does not automatically guarantee an interview. Candidates will be selected for interview based on best overall match with the requisite experience.

To Be Considered

Candidates are required to submit a comprehensive résumé and a compelling cover letter immediately for optimal consideration. Electronic submittals may be sent to: apply@ralphandersen.com. Confidential inquiries should be directed to Ms. Heather Renschler, Ralph Andersen & Associates at (916) 630-4900 or request an appointment to discuss further by contacting scheduling@ralphandersen.com.

This recruitment will be considered open and continuous and will close when a pool of highly qualified applicants has been received. Candidates are encouraged to apply early in the process for optimal consideration. Review of applicants will be upon receipt of submitted material and is expected to be well underway by March 31, 2021. This position is open until filled. Professional references will not be contacted until mutual interest has been established. Following the results of this interview, a few select individuals will be invited to interview with the City Attorney and may include other members of the City's Executive Leadership Team.

Equal Employment Opportunity

The City of Vancouver is an equal employment opportunity employer. All personnel policies and programs are administered without regard to race, color, religion, political belief, age, national origin, sex, disability, cultural background, and sexual orientation.