



CITY OF  
**Vancouver**  
WASHINGTON

**CITY ATTORNEY**

**\$163,044 - \$212,040**

*Plus Excellent Benefits*

*Apply by*

**September 1, 2019**

*(First Review, Open Until Filled)*

**PROTHMAN**



## VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON



The city of Vancouver, Washington is located on the north shore of the Columbia River, approximately ten miles north of Portland, Oregon. With an incorporated population of nearly 185,000 and a service population of approximately 250,000, Vancouver is the fourth largest city in Washington state.

Vancouver is one of the nation's most livable cities, with a growing economy, an exemplary education system, and access to high quality health care, housing, transportation, parks, and many other amenities. Vancouver's rich history is preserved and celebrated with the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, Officer's Row and the historic West Barracks. The community's relationship with the Columbia River is embraced by miles of waterfront trails and the recently opened waterfront park in downtown.

In Vancouver's vibrant downtown and all across the city, you'll find an expanding restaurant and brewery scene surrounded by the more than 60 distinct neighborhoods that make up our community.



Vancouver's robust outdoor and recreational amenities include nearly 7,000 acres of parks, over 20 miles of trails and two community centers. With a mild year-round climate, our region is the perfect place to take advantage of outdoor recreational activities like boating, hiking and biking. Vancouver also provides easy access to the Pacific Coast, only 90 miles to the west, and the Cascade Mountains, Mt. Hood and Mt. St. Helens, each about a two-hour drive away.

Vancouver is known for its excellent K-12 school system, with higher education in the region provided by Washington State University Vancouver and Clark College.

## THE ORGANIZATION

*An exceptionally vibrant, safe, welcoming and prosperous city.*

The City of Vancouver is managed by a Council/Manager form of government. The Council has seven members, including a Mayor, elected by the city at large. The Mayor and Councilmembers serve four-year terms and set policy that is implemented by the City Manager. There are ten departments within the City organization: City Manager's Office, City Attorney, Community & Economic Development, Financial & Management Services, Fire, Human Resources, Information technology, Parks & Recreation, Police and Public Works. The City currently has 1,180 FTEs with approximately 800 seasonal, temporary employees and a 2019-2020 Adopted Budget of \$1.2 billion.

Department directors whose areas provide direct service delivery to the public report to the City Manager, while the Human Resources and Information Technology directors, as well as the Risk Manager and Emergency Manager, report to the Deputy City Manager. The City routinely conducts assessments of various lines of business, seeking efficiency, effectiveness and improved outcomes. In addition, the City is invested in cultivating a lean culture and have started the process of building capacity through ongoing lean/six sigma training for employees across all departments.

The City is also committed to well-managed and stable financial operations that includes developing and implementing financial policies and practices that position the City for ongoing and long-term success.

## THE DEPARTMENT

The City Attorney's Office has 31 FTE's, including 17 attorneys. The City Attorney's Office has an attorney-client relationship with the City Manager and provides the City Council with legal advice pertaining to policy matters. The department has a biennial operating budget of \$5.6 million.

The Civil Division, comprised of 8 attorneys and 4 support staff, provides legal advice and support to the City Manager, City departments and the City Council on a wide range of strategic matters, research and document preparation, ranging from policy development, devising legal and civil litigation strategy, risk management and pre-defense. Because the City is engaged in such a diverse array of services and endeavors, the City Attorney's Office must be knowledgeable, contemporary and authoritative in numerous areas of law, including land use, environmental, torts, public contracts and bidding, public records, telecommunications, airport and aviation, labor and employment, real estate development and redevelopment, eminent domain, code enforcement, civil rights, proprietary funds, public disclosure and economic development.

The Criminal Prosecution Division, comprised of 8 attorneys and 8 support staff, is responsible for prosecuting misdemeanor and gross misdemeanors which occur in the city of Vancouver. This Division also drafts criminal ordinances, monitors state criminal justice legislation of interest to the City, provides legal advice to police officers, reviews referred police reports and decides whether criminal charges should be filed, engages in plea and charging negotiations, represents the City at pretrial hearings, tries criminal matters, and is responsible for representing the City in appellate proceedings.



The Criminal Prosecution Division also is a partner in the Domestic Violence Prosecution Center. The mission of the Domestic Violence Unit is to successfully prosecute domestic violence cases with the goal of providing victim safety, holding batterers accountable and ultimately, stopping the violence. Victims of domestic violence may receive additional support through the Domestic Violence Prosecution Center. In addition, the City's prosecution division participates in the Elder Justice Center, Children's Justice Center and various therapeutic courts operated by Clark County Superior Court under contract with the City.

The Criminal Prosecution Division includes a criminal diversion program that diverts a number of offenders out of the traditional criminal justice system and allows them to enter agreements resulting in dismissed or lesser charges in exchange for compliance with specified conditions.

## THE POSITION

The City Attorney is a highly responsible executive position that serves as the chief counsel on all legal matters within the City through a primary client relationship with the City Manager and as legal counsel for the City Council on policy matters. Though the City Council confirms the appointment or removal of the City Attorney by the City Manager, the City Attorney receives general administrative direction from the City Manager.

The City Attorney is expected to provide management, direction and leadership for staff within the City Attorney's Office. The current structure includes direct supervision over the Chief Assistant City Attorney and City Prosecutor, and indirect supervision of the balance of the City Attorney's Office, which include civil and criminal attorneys, legal assistants and secretaries, interns, a diversion counselor, advocate, and an investigator. The City Attorney plans, directs, manages and oversees the activities of these resources and coordinates assigned activities with other City departments and outside agencies, including relationships with the Clark County prosecutor's office and court system.

The City Attorney participates as a key member of the City Manager's Leadership Team, participating in collaborative and creative discussions on issues of citywide importance that go well beyond the bounds of legal advice.

As such, the City Attorney is expected to serve as a collaborator with peers at the leadership level in the organization, as well as serve as their legal advisor.

The City Attorney performs all of the assigned duties in accordance with the City of Vancouver's Operating Principles, develops and maintains collaborative and respectful working relationships with team members and others, and consistently provides quality service to the citizens of Vancouver.

#### **Other Responsibilities Include:**

- Assume full management responsibility for all City Attorney's Office services and activities including civil litigations, prosecution of City ordinance violations, advising City officials and City Council on legal issues pertaining to their proposed actions, and preparing appropriate City ordinances, resolutions and other legal documents; recommend and administer policies and procedures.
- Provide and assure highly responsive, thorough, client-centered advice and service from the City Attorney's Office in all functions and at all times; model and project and maintain a positive image on behalf of the City of Vancouver with those contacted in the course of work.
- Manage the development and implementation of City Attorney's Office goals, objectives, policies, and priorities for each assigned service area; establish, within City policy, appropriate service and staffing levels; allocate resources accordingly.
- Continuously monitor and evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery methods and procedures; assess and monitor workload, administrative and support systems, and internal reporting relationships; identify opportunities for improvement; direct the implementation of changes.
- Represent the City Attorney's Office to other City departments, elected officials and outside agencies; explain, justify and defend City Attorney's Office programs, policies, and activities; negotiate and resolve sensitive, significant and controversial issues.
- Plan, direct and coordinate, through subordinate level staff, the City Attorney's Office work plan; meet with management staff to identify and resolve problems; assign projects and programmatic areas of responsibility; review and evaluate work methods and procedures.
- Represent the City in litigation instituted against the City involving its officials, employees, staff or agents.
- Manage and participate in the development and administration of the City Attorney's Office budget; direct the forecast of additional funds needed for staffing, equipment, materials, and supplies; direct the monitoring of and approve expenditures; direct the preparation of and implement budgetary adjustments as necessary.
- Coordinate City Attorney's Office activities with those of other departments and outside agencies and organizations; provide staff assistance to the City Manager and City Council; prepare and present staff reports and other necessary correspondence.
- Provide relevant, timely, strategic legal advice to staff, City Council and various boards and commissions that ensure legally sound decisions are made in support of achieving client objectives in the development and implementation of City policies.
- Prepare properly drafted, legally defensible ordinances, resolutions and related documents needed to carry out city policies and provide appropriate legal advice and recommendations to the City Council to assist in their role as the legislative body.
- Prepare and provide legal review of contracts, agreements and other related documents needed to conduct City business.
- Initiate or defend lawsuits and be successful in any litigation which cannot otherwise be avoided so that the City's policy objectives are achieved, and the City's liability exposure is minimized.
- Prosecute crimes of violence, theft, livability and other crimes that occur in the city so that justice is served, crime is reduced and the residents' sense of safety within the community is increased.
- Work and act as a team player in all interactions with other City employees.
- Appear before courts and administrative proceedings to represent the City's interest as required; prosecute cases related to the Municipal Code.
- Analyze and review contracts which bind or obligate the City; provide legal opinions and recommendations to ensure the City is properly and effectively represented in such matters. Render legal opinions to the City Council,
- Meet with City boards and commissions, City Manager and department staff as required; conduct on-going legal research in connection with legal issues pertaining to the City.
- Participate on a variety of boards and commissions; attend and participate in professional group meetings; stay abreast of new trends and innovations in the field of law and municipal practice.

## OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

The Vancouver City Attorney's Office has a history of stable and consistent leadership, with only three City Attorneys serving in the role since 1965. Vancouver's next City Attorney is expected to bring a renewed sense of stability to leading the office while navigating some of the exceptional and dynamic opportunities facing Vancouver in the coming years:

- Recent years have reflected a period of swift change in labor and collective bargaining law in Washington State and at a national level. The next City Attorney will need to work with internal and external resources to increase depth, capacity and expertise in the areas of labor and employment law.
- As Vancouver transitions from a historically suburban community to a more urban city, the demands on complexity and sophistication of land use law and policy development are increasing as well. This, combined with planned retirements in the civil division, underscore the need to build capacity and expertise within the office in land use law practice area.



- The City has recently become more actively engaged in real estate redevelopment activities. The redevelopment City-owned assets in the city center, along with the Heights District redevelopment and planned redevelopment of City assets in the Fourth Plain Corridor all present opportunities for transformative results in key districts throughout the City over the next decade. The next City Attorney will need to assure the Office has depth and capacity to address complex, sophisticated and strategic real estate transactions.
- The City Council is currently engaged in A Stronger Vancouver, a long-term plan to assure stable, sustainable resources for all City services that will support Vancouver realizing its vision for the future, close service gaps and improve equity. The scope and complexity of the initiative will require close consultation and advise from the City Attorney on policy actions needed to successfully execute, including voted ballot propositions.
- In addition to prosecuting misdemeanors, the prosecution function of the City Attorney's Office participates in joint family law centers, working with law enforcement and prosecutorial staff from other agencies. Further, the City contracts with District Court to fulfill municipal court functions. The City Attorney will need to work with the City Prosecutor and the Clark County courts system to assure highly functional, efficient and effective relationships through these complex partnerships at all levels or operations.
- The City Attorney's Office, along with other departments across the City, is transitioning to a new records management platform. The City Attorney will need to assure continued progress on this front, including training, and use expectations for the office as a whole.

## IDEAL CANDIDATE PROFILE

### Education and Experience:

A Juris Doctorate from an accredited law school, and ten (10) years of increasingly responsible professional experience, including least 5 years in a management and leadership position in a law office of comparable size and complexity. Experience practicing municipal or other government law including trial experience is required. Candidates must have membership in the Washington State Bar or ability to secure membership upon appointment and a license to practice law in the Federal courts.

**Necessary Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:**

- The ideal candidate will be progressive and innovative, a strategic thinker, and take a proactive approach to developing and executing goals of the department.
- As a key member of the management leadership team, the ideal candidate must collaborate with, critique and advance change initiatives throughout the entire organization with their peers.
- Commitment to exceptional stewardship of the public's resources, and experience with performance management and process improvement.
- A proven track record of mentoring, developing growing talent and supporting the career development of legal staff to assure the most contemporary, progressive and thoroughly informed legal thinking; committed to accountability for results and outcomes from staff, peers, partners and agencies.
- The ideal candidate will be authoritative in contemporary municipal law practice in the state of Washington, as well as facile in developing innovative and progressive approaches to addressing the City's policy objectives and legal issues.
- Ability to lead the department in growing a collaborative culture of continuous improvement at the professional level and in the department's operations, as well as contribute to the same in their peer management leadership group.
- The ideal candidate will have and demonstrate the highest standards of integrity and professional ethics and expect the same of their staff and peers.
- Candidates must embrace a commitment to service and actively support the same in the culture of the City Attorney's Office and the organization.
- A proven track record and philosophy of providing excellent customer service, both internally and externally, to clients and partners.
- Ability to be proactive and focused on problem avoidance and problem remediation, and experience as a strong negotiator.
- Ability to provide reliable, constructive and reasoned advice to the City Council when needed.

- Experience as an active participant in discussions, adding analytical value and contributing constructively to organizational and community issues and opportunities. Candidates must give the highest regard to the legal opinion and be untainted by their own personal views or the views of others.
- Superior research skills and extensive experience making timely analytical and reasoned judgments on issues of public sensitivity and importance.
- The ideal candidate will be able to accept and support decisions in a positive manner, and foster cooperation between the City's departments.
- Proven ability as a good listener who consistently works well with personnel throughout all levels of the City. The successful candidate must be able to communicate complex issues and connect with a variety of audiences.

**COMPENSATION & BENEFITS**

- **\$163,044 - \$212,040 DOQ**
- Medical, Vision, Prescription, and Dental
- Personal Time Off (PTO)
- Washington State PERS Retirement System
- Deferred Compensation (457 Plan)
- Optional Additional 401 Plan Available With 1% City Match
- Paid Holidays
- Life Insurance/AD&D
- Long-term Disability Insurance - Optional Coverage
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- Work/Life Balance Opportunities

To learn more, please visit:  
[www.cityofvancouver.us](http://www.cityofvancouver.us)



The City of Vancouver is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All qualified candidates are strongly encouraged to apply by **September 1, 2019**. (First review, open until filled) Applications, supplemental questions, resumes and cover letters will only be accepted electronically. To apply online, go to [www.prothman.com](http://www.prothman.com) and click on "submit your application" and follow the directions provided. Resumes, cover letters and supplemental questions can be uploaded once you have logged in.



[www.prothman.com](http://www.prothman.com)

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