

CITY ATTORNEY

The City Attorney acts as general counsel to the City. The City Attorney's Office utilizes a collaborative approach to providing legal services to the City with Kelly Fernandez, of the law firm of Persson, Cohen, Mooney, Fernandez, and Jackson, P.A., serving as City Attorney and other attorneys in the firm serving as Assistant City Attorneys. While the City Attorney oversees all work product, the Assistant City Attorneys (David Jackson, Dan Lewis, Karla Armstrong, and Amy Farrington) assist in the legal representation of all City Departments. Typically, litigation matters are assigned to outside counsel through the City's insurer or directly by the City in the absence of insurance coverage. In addition, the City has a standing engagement for labor and employment matters with the law firm Ogletree Deakins and occasionally utilizes special counsel for other areas of legal specialization when beneficial.

As part of her duties, the City Attorney or attorneys from her office attend all City Council meetings as well as meetings of the Planning Commission, Historic and Architectural Preservation Board, and Special Magistrate. Other responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the preparation/review of ordinances and resolutions, consultation with city officials and staff, contract preparation/review, and overseeing special counsel assigned to handle litigation and other specialized matters.

The goals and objectives of the City Attorney's Office are as follows:

- 1) To provide prompt and accurate legal advice to elected and appointed City officials and City staff so they can best serve the needs of the citizens and taxpayers of the City.
- 2) To implement and support policy directives of the City Council.
- 3) To ensure legal compliance across all City Departments by monitoring and advising on federal, state, and local requirements, thereby minimizing the City's exposure to legal liability.
- 4) To develop and maintain a budget that adequately covers City legal needs, both by the City Attorney's Office and special counsel, without unnecessary expenditures.
- 5) To provide quarterly legal activity reports on the major activities of the City Attorney's Office.
- 6) To keep Council and senior management informed on the status of all litigation matters being handled or overseen by the City Attorney's Office and achieve beneficial, cost-effective results for the City.

BUDGET SUMMARY

	Actual FY 2024	Actual FY 2025	Amended Budget FY 2026	Proposed Budget FY 2027
Operations	383,647	444,594	441,991	447,843
Totals	\$ 383,647	\$ 444,594	\$ 441,991	\$ 447,843



CITY OF VENICE
CITY ATTORNEY
EXPENDITURES

001-0501

As of 5/15/2026

Department 0501	Actual FY 2024	Actual FY 2025	Adopted Budget FY 2026	Amends/ Proj/Enc Rolls to FY 2026	Amended Budget FY 2026	YTD Thru 3/31/26	% YTD FY26	Expected FY 2026	Positive (Negative) Variance	Proposed Budget FY 2027	Incr (Decr) over FY26 Adopted Budget	vs. 26 Adopt. Bud	FY2027 Budget Comments
Exp - Professional Services	383,647	444,594	441,991	0	441,991	189,723	43%	441,991	0	447,843	5,852	1.3%	
514.31-03 - PROFESSIONAL SERVICES / LEGAL	383,647	444,594	441,991	0	441,991	189,723	43%	441,991	0	447,843	5,852	1.3%	FY26: No CPI on retainer +\$100K with 2.3% CPI nonretainer FY27: 2.4% CPI on annual retainer, no increase on nonretainer