CITY OF BELLINGHAM

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE: **Assistant City Attorney, Senior** **E-PLAN SG:E2-14**

DEPARTMENT: **Legal** **CS:N FLSA:N EEO4CODE:OA**

JOB SUMMARY:

Assists the City Attorney in the performance of the legal work of the City. Incumbents are responsible for providing advanced professional legal work involving a wide variety of municipal legal subjects including complex civil, administrative, and criminal matters. Incumbents are responsible for multiple practice areas, but typically focus on a subset of the essential functions below.

SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIPS:

Directly responsible to the City Attorney. Works under general guidance and direction in accordance with City policies, procedures, codes, ordinances, and various state and federal regulations. May provide direction or distribute work assignments to Assistant City Attorneys and/or various levels of support staff.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

1. Maintains current knowledge of laws, litigation, regulations, court cases, and issues affecting municipal governments.

2. Provides legal counsel and representation in assigned areas of specialty which may include any of the following: municipal law, planning, land use, infrastructure development, environmental law, water rights, water quality, real estate transactions, risk management, employment law, public records, municipal finance, elections, technology law, ethics and conflicts of interest, procurement law, interlocal contracting, public works, general contracting, and public/private partnerships.

3. Performs lead litigation responsibilities, including pretrial practice, investigation, evidence/testimony development, discovery, motions practice, and trials; assumes similar responsibilities as to administrative hearings and arbitrations; and assigns litigation support work to legal support personnel.

4. Handles liability claims by directing the investigation of claims and the activities of staff that assist with and coordinate claims evaluation; makes recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on claims disposition.

5. Reviews and negotiates City contracts for construction projects, garbage collection and disposal, franchises, real estate transactions, agreements with other governmental entities, property development, management of City facilities, and related matters.

6. Drafts legal documents such as ordinances, resolutions, releases, settlement agreements, real estate documents, and interlocal agreements.

7. Provides legal support, conducts legal research and advises staff and departments on a variety of issues. Represents departments in legal proceedings and before boards and commissions. Acts as principal liaison to outside counsel as needed. This position requires working with independence consistent with an attorney-client relationship.

8. Reviews and makes recommendations on indemnity and insurance provisions of City contracts.

9. Reviews requests for documents under the Public Records Act, ensuring the City responds as required by law and appropriately applies exemptions.

10. Provides advice to departments regarding risk management. Manages general liability insurance program including preparing the budget, generating quarterly and annual claims reports, and consulting with brokers, the Mayor, and the City Council regarding insurance concerns.

11. Manages legal related projects such as environmental cleanup process, municipal code updates and revisions, and modifications to City processes.

ADDITIONAL WORK PERFORMED:

1. Performs other related work of a similar nature or level.

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS (Knowledge, Skills, And Abilities):

Knowledge of:
- Revised Code of Washington, the Washington Administrative Code, various federal codes, and Bellingham City Code.
- Legal research methodology including use of computer-based research tools.
- Municipal government organizational structure, operations, policies, objectives, and jurisdiction.
- Principles, practices and procedures of civil law including court procedures and rules.
- Thorough knowledge of several areas of law and legal practice, including: municipal law, technology law, procurement law, employment and benefits law, public records, planning, land use, infrastructure development, real estate, risk management and insurance, tort law, administrative procedure and evidence, civil litigation techniques and procedures, criminal law and procedure, constitutional law, water rights and water quality, environmental cleanup/habitat restoration, elections, municipal finance, ethics and conflict of interest, interlocal contracting, general contracting, and public/private partnerships.

Skill in:

- Using computers and related software applications.
- Using office equipment.
- Analyzing problems and advanced decision-making.
- Planning, organizing, and managing projects.
- Prioritizing projects and working under deadlines.
- Writing legal documents, agreements, legislation, and policies.
- Negotiating contracts.
- Attending to details.
- Litigation, including pretrial and motions practice.
- Preparing and presenting trials and administrative hearings.
- Providing legal counsel.
- Researching best practices and trends.
- Researching legal issues.
- Advanced communication and interpersonal skills for persuasion, providing legal counsel, conflict management, and conveying complex information to coworkers, supervisors, managers, department directors, the Mayor, City Council, and the general public.
- Strong organizational skills.
- Excellent writing and presentation skills.
- Excellent judgment and discretion.

Ability to:
- Work independently in performing essential functions under general policy and strategic guidance.
- Analyze, organize and evaluate case facts, evidence and legal precedent.
- Meet schedules and timelines.
- Appear in court proceedings and in other forums on behalf of, and as the attorney for, the City.
- Build and maintain effective client relationships.
- Maintain consistent and punctual attendance.
- Ability and willingness to demonstrate the Public Service Competencies of Service Orientation, Results Orientation, and Teamwork and Cooperation.
- Physical ability to perform the essential functions of the job, including:
  - Frequently operate a computer and other office machinery such as a keyboard, mouse, phone, and copier/fax machine;
  - Frequently communicate accurate information and ideas with others;
  - Travel between worksites.

WORKING ENVIRONMENT:

Work is primarily performed in an office environment with the majority of time spent at a computer workstation. Travel to court, seminars and meetings as needed. This is a sedentary position with minimal physical exertion requirements

EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

- Admission to the Washington State Bar and a member in good standing throughout duration of employment, and

- Four years of professional legal experience as an attorney with a preference for experience that is substantially related to one or more responsible areas of practice, or
- Four years of experience as Assistant City Attorney with the City of Bellingham.
- An equivalent combination of education and experience sufficient to provide the applicant with the knowledge, skill and ability to successfully perform the essential functions of the job will be considered.

NECESSARY SPECIAL REQUIREMENT:

- Employment contingent upon passing a criminal background check.
- Incumbents may not engage in the private practice of law while employed.

PREPARED BY: S. Mahaffey
J. Hoisington
L. Klemanski
1/01

REVIEWED BY: _____
Alan Marriner
City Attorney

REVISED BY: A. Mariner
A. Sullivan
6/21
A.Kraham
A. Sullivan
A. Silva
11/24