

Office of the City Attorney Strategic Plan

Division Name: Legal / Civil

Mission Statement: The City Attorney's Office is guided by a fundamental commitment to service, and will provide to the City of Spokane legal service marked by excellence and efficiency. The City Attorney's Office emphasizes action and results. Based on careful research and analysis, it is prepared to take timely action on important and pressing issues. The City Attorney's Office addresses difficult problems and recognizes the possibility of failure as an acceptable risk.

Definition of Customer: We are an internal service provider to the employees, officers and officials of the City of Spokane.

Definition of Service Provided: Broad-based legal services.

Strengths:

1. Experience;
2. Expert discrete knowledge;
3. Available on short notice;
4. Wide diversity of skills and abilities;
5. Talented lawyers and staff.

Weaknesses:

1. Inadequate physical plant for practice of law;
2. Unbalanced work loads;
3. Some confusion between attorney and support tasks;
4. Inadequate continuing education;
5. Weak professional evaluation assessment tools.

Opportunities:

1. More and better education;
2. More directed focus on administration and council initiatives;
3. More focus and concentration on collaborative problem solving;
4. Recognize and cultivate important relationships.

Threats:

1. Apathy;
2. Less than adequate funding;
3. General bureaucracy.

Key Success Factors:

1. We must communicate well and often;
2. We must know the law and give definitive, correct advice;
3. We must be rapidly responsive;
4. We must reflect dedication to our clients in everything we do;
5. We must be role models for the formation of trusting relationships and conflict resolution.

Goals and Strategies:

1. We will measurably achieve increased efficiency, better service, and a more excellent work product during calendar year 2007;
2. We will more closely monitor the progress of pending litigation, the formulation and issuance of legal opinions, and the timeliness of accurate responses to clients through an improved time keeping and matter tracking system;
3. We will remain cognizant of cost efficiencies and the implementation of same in both the civil and criminal departments;
4. We will strive through closer case tracking and monitoring to improve the balance of work among professional and support staff;

5. We will better organize, encourage and support continuing educational opportunities for both professional and support staff;
6. We will strive to facilitate and support more frequent and more accurate communication and collaboration among our professional and support staff, as well as with our clients;
7. We will consciously assess the relationship between the work we do and Mayor/Council initiatives intended to advance and improve the City.