

The City of Lake City currently relies on external legal counsel for various legal matters, resulting in significant and unpredictable legal expenditures. Bringing an attorney in-house presents an opportunity to improve efficiency, reduce costs, and provide more responsive legal support to city departments and leadership.

Cost Control & Savings

- Significant reduction in billable hours
- Predictable costs via salaried position

Faster, More Responsive Legal Guidance

- Immediate access to legal counsel for city leadership and staff
- No delays waiting for outside availability

Institutional Knowledge & Continuity

- Deep familiarity with city policies, politics, and personnel
- More consistent legal advice across departments

Proactive Legal Strategy

- Risk prevention vs. reaction
- Regular training and guidance to prevent costly legal missteps

Financial Considerations:

Proposed Expenses for Attorney and Legal Assistant, including Benefits

City Attorney	Type	Code	Amount
	Earnings		\$ 150,000.00
	Tax	SS (Social Security)	\$ 9,527.51
	Tax	MED (Medicare)	\$ 2,228.21
	Benefit	RFSM (FL Senior Management)	\$ 51,982.58
	Benefit	FL BLUE (Florida Blue 05770) Employee Only	\$ 8,200.80
	Benefit	DISAB (Long Term Disability - Flat Rate)	\$ 463.56
	Benefit	MET 1X (MET LIFE 1X - Flat Rate)	\$ 120.60
	Worker Compensation	8810 (Clerical Office Emp-NOC)	\$ 199.76
			\$ 222,723.02
Legal Asst.	Type	Code	Amount
	Earnings		\$ 61,838.92
	Tax	SS (Social Security)	\$ 3,834.02
	Tax	MED (Medicare)	\$ 896.66
	Benefit	RFGE (FL Retirement Regular)	\$ 8,255.69
	Benefit	FL BLUE (Florida Blue 05770) Employee Only	\$ 8,200.80
	Benefit	DISAB (Long Term Disability - Flat Rate)	\$ 201.36
	Benefit	MET 1X (MET LIFE 1X - Flat Rate)	\$ 60.36
	Worker Compensation	8810 (Clerical Office Emp-NOC)	\$ 80.47
			\$ 83,368.28
		Total	\$ 306,091.30

External legal counsel is currently retained on an as-needed basis, at hourly rates. The chart below is the City Attorney Past Expenses from FY15 to FY25.

	City Attorney	Other Legal Services
FY 2015	\$178,196.16	\$6,975.54
FY 2016	\$211,837.62	\$17,984.46
FY 2017	\$466,221.78	\$14,535.00
FY 2018	\$467,662.35	\$5,335.00
FY 2019	\$187,618.42	\$21,765.02
FY 2020	\$155,642.46	\$28,999.10
FY 2021	\$158,339.52	\$57,812.16
FY 2022	\$254,161.47	\$12,476.86
FY 2023	\$185,881.83	\$30,737.10
FY 2024	\$ 144,476.58	\$34,565.11
FY 2025	\$73,575.20	\$18,661.35

Attorney justification information:

\$350.00 hourly rate (private clients)

\$185.00 hourly rate (City Rate)

\$100.00 (City Rate for the Legal Assistant)

Attorney contract total cost: \$230,700.00

\$195,700.00 divided by \$185.00 = 1057 per year

Total work hours per year= 2080

2080 (proposed work hours) -1058 (work hours now working)= 1,022 more possible work hours

Attorney's normal hourly rate is \$350.00. Please see below for the comparison:

\$350.00 (2080) = \$728,000 yearly

\$185.00 (2080) = \$384,800 yearly

Cost will be approximately \$306,091.31

Bringing legal counsel in-house will increase operational efficiency, strengthen legal compliance, and reduce long-term costs for the City of Lake City. This strategic investment supports better governance, more responsive public service, and fiscal responsibility.