



We're Still Seeking Great Candidates

CITY ATTORNEY POSITION AVAILABLE

Reopened—Apply by April 6, 2020

Welcome to the City of Lawton

Located in southwestern Oklahoma near the Wichita Mountains, Lawton is the state's fifth largest municipality. It is a City on the Move—one that is not content to rest on its laurels but ready to seize the future! It boasts the best of the Great Plains and is perfectly sized—large enough to provide many desirable urban draws without having many of the issues of a big city. It maintains a comfortable small town atmosphere where the residents have strong values and are welcoming, warm, friendly, and caring. Many parks provide wonderful spaces for outdoor activities. The cost of living is 12% below the national average, and local schools provide a good education. Lawton is simply the perfect place to live, work, play, and raise a family.

History comes to life in Lawton. The Museum of the Great Plains is dedicated to the history of the region. The Fort Sill National Historic Landmark and Museum actually hosts three museums, and an Indian graveyard, including Geronimo's grave. Military history is on display through numerous vintage artillery pieces and through tributes to soldiers who paid the ultimate price. The nearby Comanche



National Museum and Cultural Center offers programs and exhibits that deepen the understanding and appreciation of the tribe's history, culture, and art.

Lawton has quite a few cultural venues and groups. These include the Lawton Community Theater, Southwest Oklahoma Opera Guild, Wichita Wildlife Photographic Society, Lawton Philharmonic Orchestra, and Lawton Pro Musica. Local events include the Arts for All Festival, the International Festival, the Armed Forces Parade, and the Lawton Fort Sill Freedom Festival (which features one of the largest fireworks displays in the state).

Lawton prides itself on having been selected as a Certified Healthy Community for each of the last three years. The Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, Lake Lawtonka and Lake Ellsworth are all within a 30 minute drive and offer boating, hiking trails, swimming, sailing, camping, and fishing during most of the year. The area is one of the top rated mountain biking areas in the nation. Notably, the Refuge covers 59,000 acres of natural grassland with glimpses of bison and longhorn cattle. Rising to 2,464 feet, Mount Scott beckons hikers. If you like to hunt, deer, elk and birds are common to the area.

As a regional hub, Lawton offers everything from national retail giants to one of a kind boutiques, local shops, and unique spots. Housing in Lawton is very affordable—Zillow reports the median listing price just below 100,000. While many homes are single-family dwellings, townhomes and apartments are available. Crime has been on a downward trend due to proactive policing and a strong commitment to community partnerships. As a result, in 2018 Lawton was named a “Comeback City,” an honor that recognized 100 cities that had taken major strides in reducing crime and creating safer communities. Also, in 2018, it earned (and has maintained) a “Class 1” ISO rating, meaning the City is the top 5% in the nation for the quality of its fire protection.

The Lawton Public Schools District serves more than 14,000 students and includes seventeen elementary schools, four middle schools, and three high schools. Among these are two National Schools of Character. Lawton has been dubbed Oklahoma's STEM City for its emphasis on STEM studies. The City also has several privately operated schools: Lawton Christian School, Trinity Baptist Academy, St. Mary's Catholic School, and the Lawton Academy of Arts and Sciences.

For higher education, Lawton is home to Cameron University, which is the largest university in southwest Oklahoma and one of the most affordable. It offers associate, baccalaureate, and master's degrees in more than fifty program areas. Nearby Platt College and the Great Plains Technology Center provide additional excellent educational opportunities.

If you like the big city lights, it is only a 75 minute drive northeast to Oklahoma City and a two and a half hour drive southeast to the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex. Both offer international airports. The Lawton-Fort Sill Regional Airport provides limited commercial air service.

Adjacent military installations and quality educational entities make Lawton one of the most diverse communities in the state. Lawton's residents have big hearts. Volunteerism is strong and, when a need arises, residents step up and help. They are proud of their community. On February 11th, voters will vote on a referendum to extend an expiring sales tax. If approved, the proceeds will be used to attract additional industries to the community and for infrastructure needs such as roads, parks, and a large indoor athletic complex for children.

Adjacent to Lawton is Fort Sill, home to 29,000 military and dependent personnel. On any given day, another 6,500 trainees are stationed here. The post hosts the U.S. Army FIRES Center of Excellence, which integrates field artillery and air defense artillery, as well as the Army Targeting Center. Fort Sill expends approximately two billion dollars



annually. Its presence is so significant and valued in the community that the City Council has a seat on the dais for the U.S. Army's Fort Sill Liaison Representative. In recognition for its support of the military and its veterans, Lawton received the Pinnacle Award as a Large Veteran Friendly Community in 2019. Some 33,000 military retirees and dependents live in the Lawton/Comanche County area.

Lawton is rife with opportunity. It is a resilient city with a history of growth and progress. Current leadership plans to keep the City moving forward. With its cultural richness, its warmth, and its magnificent outdoors, Lawton has much to offer. Apply to be our City Attorney to truly experience its charm!

HISTORY

Present-day Oklahoma was settled by the Wichita and Caddo tribes. They were later joined by the Comanches and Kiowas. The region came under French control in the 18th century, and fur trading was the basis of interactions between the tribes and the settlers.

In 1869, Major General Philip Sheridan established Fort Sill. The city of Lawton then sprang up virtually overnight. It was designated as the seat of Comanche County in 1901. Later that year, the Lawton city government was formally established, and the first municipal election held. Over the succeeding years, the form of government changed several times before the City settled on the council-manager system in 1972.

Both World Wars I and II accelerated growth of Lawton/Fort Sill area. To meet the increased needs, specifically additional water supply, the City built a dam on East Cache Creek. Construction was completed in 1962. The resulting Lake Ellsworth covers 5,600 acres, and also is used for recreational activities.

Further infrastructure has benefited the City. Completed in 1964, a turnpike connects Lawton to the state capital, Oklahoma City. The 1970’s saw urban renewal efforts that transformed the downtown. The Base Realignment and Closure of 2005 increased the size of Fort Sill and created growth in Lawton. The City’s future is bright.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Table 1: Panama City Beach Demographics

Estimated Population: 92,859			
Distribution by Race		Distribution by Age	
White	58.9%	0 to 15	21.0%
Black	20.9%	15 to 25	17.9%
Asian	2.8%	25 to 45	29.6%
Native American	5.1%	45 to 65	21.2%
Two or More Races	12.3%	65 to 85	9.0%
Total	100%	Over 85	1.3%
Hispanic Ethnicity (all races)	13.9%		

Educational Achievement (Over Age 25)	
High School or Higher	89.2%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	20.9%

Educational Achievement (Over Age 25)	
Median Age-Lawton	30.8
Median Age-U.S.	37.8
Median Household Income	\$44,335
Poverty Rate	19.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

CLIMATE

Lawton experiences a dry subtropical climate, with hot summers and chilly winters. Average high temperatures in the summer can range from the low to mid 90’s°F, while low temperatures are near 70°F. Winters are much milder, with little precipitation. The average winter high temperature is in the low to high 50’s, with and average low in the mid 30’s. Periods of extreme cold occur from time to time. Lawton is located in Tornado Alley and subject to occasional severe weather events.

GEOGRAPHY

Lawton is the fifth largest city in Oklahoma, spanning 75.1 square miles. It is located 84 miles southwest of Oklahoma City, 47 miles north of Wichita Falls, and approximately 180 miles northwest of Dallas. The area is part of the Great Plains and as such, characterized by prairies and generally flat topography. The Wichita Mountains lie north of the City and carry the area’s highest peaks. Lawton is approximately 1,100 above sea level.

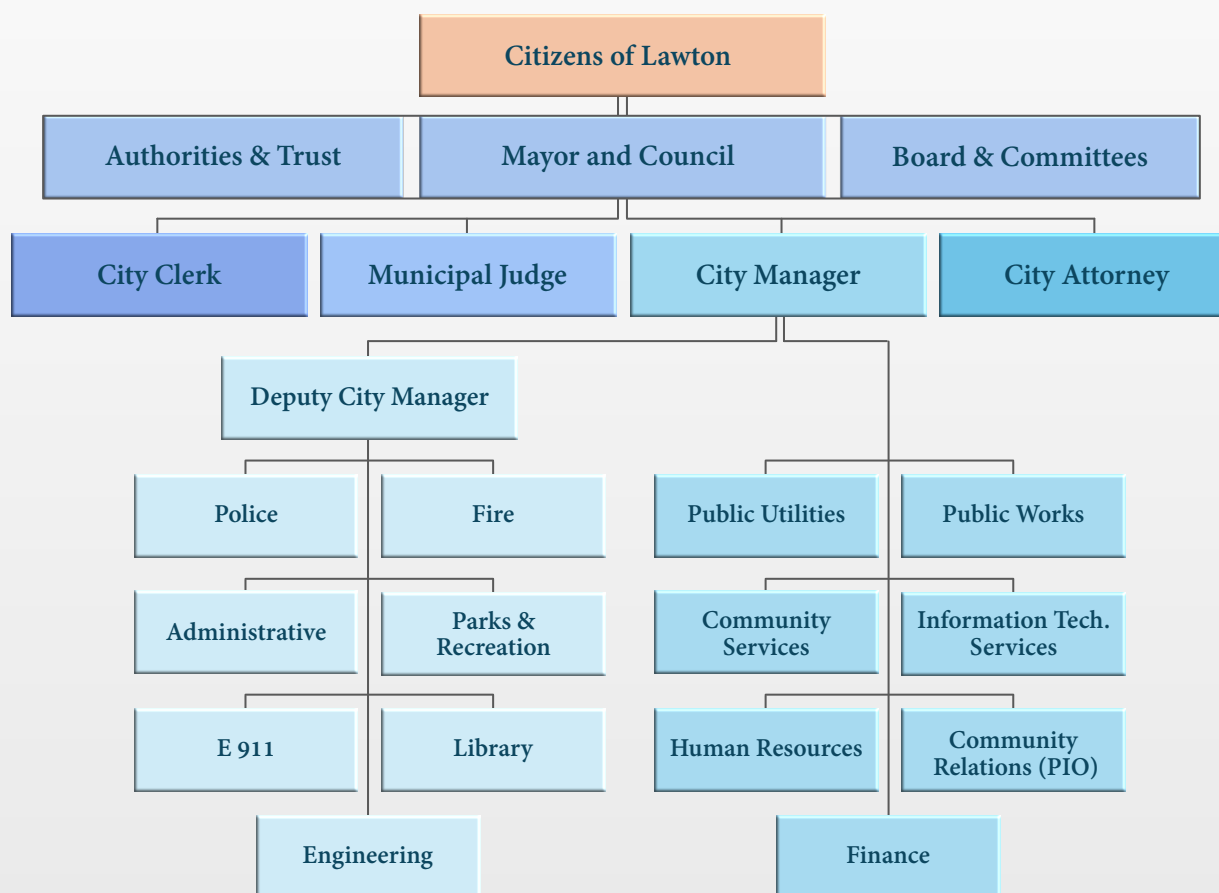
COMMERCE

The economy of the Lawton metropolitan area ranks fourth in Oklahoma and is primarily centered on government, manufacturing, and retail trade. Fort Sill (and related defense contractors), Goodyear Tire and Rubber and Republic Paperboard play leading roles in the community’s vitality. The City is business friendly and in 2015 Google recognized it with its eCity Award as the “2015 Digital Capital of Oklahoma”; that is, for having the strongest online business community in the state.

THE GOVERNMENT

Lawton utilizes the council-manager model of government, in which the primary authority resides with the City Council. It approves ordinances, resolutions, and contracts. The members of the Council are elected from

City of Lawton Organization Chart



the eight wards and serve staggered three-year terms. The Mayor is elected every three years and presides over the council meetings. The City's day-to-day administration is overseen by the City Manager, who is appointed by a majority vote of the Council. The Council also appoints the City Attorney, the City Clerk, and the Municipal Judge.

The City provides public services through fourteen major departments and more than fifty divisions. As a Charter City, Lawton also works with a number of authorities and trusts to provide and administer services.

Overall, the City has 865 employees and the FY 2019/2020 general fund budget is \$58.8 million with a total budget of \$372.2 million. The largest components of the total budget are the Sinking Fund/Debt Service/CIP (\$185.3 million),

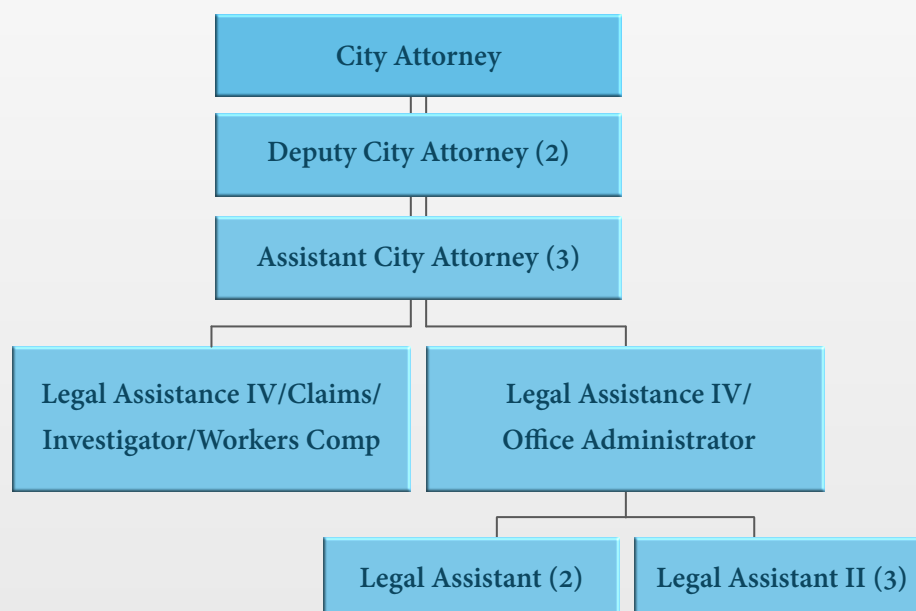
Special Revenue Funds (\$90.4 million), the aforementioned General Fund, and the Enterprise Fund (\$17.7 million).

The City has two unions. Police Officers are represented by the International Union of Police Associations, while the firefighters are represented by the International Association of Fire Fighters.

THE LEGAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

The Mayor and Council provide long-range direction and guidance on legal policy issues. The City Attorney, as the director of the Legal Services Department, generally proceeds independently in accordance with the Council's plans, policies and purpose of the department.

Legal Services Department Organization Chart



In addition to advising the elected officials and staff on legal matters, the Department handles personnel and union matters (including negotiations), and prosecutes all misdemeanor criminal offenses for violations of Lawton City Code.

The Department is comprised of the City Attorney, two Deputy City Attorneys, three Assistant City Attorneys and seven Legal Assistants. While the City Prosecutor is under the supervision of the City Attorney, he operates independently in many ways. His efforts are focused on resolving the 21,000 tickets written by the police and 450 misdemeanor cases. The Department has a budget of \$1,335,711 for FY 2019-2020.

THE CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

The Legal Services Department is comprised of very capable attorneys and support staff. Recent events have negatively impacted the Department's image. The next City Attorney's most significant challenge will be to undertake a complete review of the Department. The goal

will be to ensure it operates in the most efficient and effective manner possible. Part of the effort will involve rebuilding the office's morale, developing an esprit de corps, and bringing it together as a cohesive unit. Best management practices will need to be implemented along with mentoring, coaching and team building.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The City Council is looking for an outstanding leader and manager to make the Legal Services Department the best in Oklahoma. He/she will partner with the elected officials and staff to solve problems while also being a trusted adviser. The individual will understand his/her role and avoid becoming involved in politics. The ideal candidate will work diligently to protect the legal interests and assets of the City. At the same time, he/she will find the most effective solution to the problem, even if it involves some risk. Exhibiting excellent independent judgment as well as the highest level of professionalism, ethics, integrity and dedication will be necessary to establish credibility.



The best candidate will be an exceptional manager, someone who is just as comfortable in the City Attorney role overseeing day-to-day operations as practicing the law. He/she will supervise 12 people. As such, he/she must understand how to motivate and manage staff.

The ideal candidate will be responsive and well-versed in municipal law. When he/she does not know the answer to a question, the individual will say so and, after appropriate research, promptly provide the correct answer. The City Attorney will give all nine members of the Council the same information and keep them all equally and well informed.

The City Attorney will review issues with an open mind and, when applying the law, actively seek ways to “get the City where it wants to go.” The emphasis is on being a facilitative attorney rather than a

prescriptive attorney; that is, on how to get things done, not that they cannot be done.

Administratively, the next City Attorney will understand and have experience with budgets, staff management and setting priorities. The individual will ensure staff members have the resources needed to effectively perform their job duties. The ideal candidate will be a mentor and focus on developing staff. He/she will recognize the importance of and build a strong, pro-active and dynamic team within the office. The individual will be fair, friendly, have a sense of humor, and work effectively in what can sometimes be a stressful environment.

Communications and interpersonal skills will be very important. The City Attorney will interact with a wide variety of people from diverse backgrounds and need to communicate with individuals from all levels of the community in a variety of settings. He/she will be very open, approachable, and willing to learn. Excellent listening skills and patience will be critical. It will be important that he/she be viewed as reasonable and cooperative. Knowledge of bonds and financing instruments is helpful.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

The selected individual must have graduated from an ABA accredited law school with a Juris Doctorate Degree and should be able to be admitted to practice law before the Supreme Court of Oklahoma. Within six months of employment the new City Attorney should be admitted to practice law before the United States District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma and for United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit. Additionally, the ideal candidate will have at least five (5) years of experience as a practicing attorney and as a manager with knowledge across the spectrum of municipal law.

RECIPROCITY

Oklahoma has reciprocity with many other states. The selected candidate will need to become licensed to practice in Oklahoma.

COMPENSATION

While the salary range is \$110,000 to \$140,000, the actual salary will depend on qualifications and experience. Benefits are excellent. The City Attorney falls under the OKMRF (State) defined contribution pension plan. The City also offers a 457 plan and whether the City contributes to that plan is a contractual item to negotiate.

RESIDENCY

The City Attorney is required to reside within Lawton's city limits during his/her tenure as City Attorney.

HOW TO APPLY

If you are interested in this position, email your cover letter and resume to **Recruit22@cb-asso.com** by April 6, 2020. Faxed and mailed resumes will not be considered. Questions should be directed to Rick Conner at (915) 227-7002, or Colin Baenziger at (561) 707-3537.

INTERNAL CANDIDATES

No internal candidates are expected apply. That said, the City Council is committed to a level playing field and intends to select the candidate who is the best fit with the Council, staff and community; who has the best qualifications; and whose experience indicates he/she can manage the Legal Services Department.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Applications will be kept strictly confidential, and no names will be released without the permission of the applicant.

THE PROCESS

Applications will be screened between April 7th and March 29th. Finalists will be selected on April 30th. A reception and interviews will be held on May 9th with a selection being made shortly thereafter.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The City of Lawton is an Equal Opportunity Employer and encourages women, minorities and veterans to apply.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information about the City visit:

www.lawtonok.gov/

www.lawtonfortsillchamber.com/

www.lawtonedc.com/

www.lawtonproud.com

