



**CITY ATTORNEY POSITION AVAILABLE**  
Apply by April 1, 2019

## Welcome to Vero Beach, Florida!

2019 marks the centennial of the founding of one of Florida's most iconic cities: Vero Beach. While it is often referred to as "The Hidden Jewel of the Treasure Coast," it is hardly unknown. In fact, Disney chose it to be its first resort beyond its park when it developed its Vero Beach resort.

It is simply an idyllic community on Florida's East Coast. Those who know Florida and its coastal cities widely acclaim it for its beauty, warmth and activities while incorporating a slower pace of life. A haven of history, architecture, and culture, Vero Beach's citizens have worked hard to protect its character, livability, and sense of community. It is truly a special place for both visitors and residents.

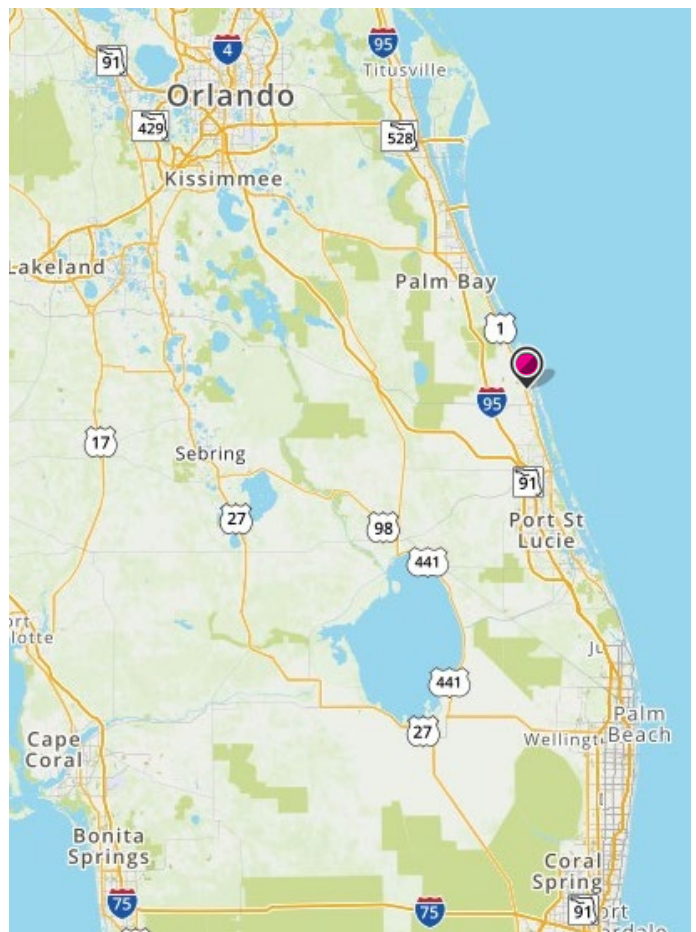


While the entire Treasure Coast (running from Martin to Indian River Counties) is picturesque, Vero Beach's horizons will take your breath away. Its three main public beaches are South Beach, Humiston Park, and Jaycee Park, though the Sexton Plaza Beach is also a must-see. They are all peaceful, clean, and gorgeous, while stretching for miles. Each is well-equipped with comforts and indulgences, including covered picnic areas, boardwalks, restaurants, shopping and parking.

Those who love to walk or run will find many trails with beach access, such as Sea Grape and Turtle Trails.

For those who enjoy being on the water, the adjacent Atlantic Ocean offers many opportunities for boating, fishing, water skiing, diving, and kayaking. Another important feature running through Vero Beach is the Indian River Lagoon. Stretching for miles, it is a nature lovers paradise which includes five state parks, four federal wildlife refuges, and a national seashore.

Vero Beach may be a small town but there is nothing sleepy about it. In fact, it is a cultural mecca, and has something for everyone. Its arts district is a well-known destination. With many fine restaurants, it is anchored by the Museum of Art. Theater is popular here and highlighted by the Riverside Theater. Vero Beach High School offers wonderful musical performances. In fact, its orchestra recently spent two weeks on a European tour starting in Vienna, and, by the time you read this, will have participated in the National Orchestra Cup at the Alice Tully Hall at the Lincoln Center. The high school band just got back from London where it played in the New Year's Day Parade 2019. A group is now exploring the possibility



of starting a ballet. In other words, the city offers virtually everything you can find in New York City—just not as much of it. The really good news is you do not have to share it with nearly as many people.

What truly makes Vero Beach special, however, are its residents. They are not caught up in the South Florida bling—you will find them to be largely unpretentious, friendly, welcoming, and cooperative. It is an active, altruistic community that is supportive of charity. They value the city's small town feel and hospitality, and will fight to protect it.

History plays a large role in Vero Beach, and residents celebrate it. In fact, as noted previously, the city is currently





celebrating its centennial. Residents are paying homage to the city's roots with musical celebrations, dancing, crafting, and an art show. There is even a treasure hunt planned! It actually began New Year's Day when the city lit up the waterways with a centennial boat parade, filled with gleaming lights and beautiful sights. Events will continue through late October.

Other historic sites include Dodgertown (the former training facility for the Major League Baseball's Los Angeles Dodgers), the County Courthouse, the McKee Jungle Gardens, the Old Palmetto Hotel, the Pueblo and Royal Park Arcades, the Vero Beach Diesel Power Plant (now a popular microbrewery and restaurant), the Vero Theatre, and the Vero Railroad Station. Each of them offers an authentic look into Vero Beach's past and helps explain what brought it to where it is today—a thriving community of culture and activity.

The Historic Downtown Vero Beach has been recently revitalized, and offers not just the architecture, but also shopping, dining, antique stores, and art galleries. The Indian River Mall and the Vero Beach Outlets lie nearby, as well as the small specialty shops along Ocean Drive on the barrier island and in the "Miracle Mile." A trip to the latter is well worth the drive, as the boulevard is known as "one of South Florida's most sought-after shopping destinations" with its restaurants, shops, boutiques, and galleries.

Housing and the cost of living are both very reasonable here. The median price of homes is \$214,000, and many nice homes are listed under \$200,000. For those seeking the luxurious, there are homes with sprawling yards and waterfront views beginning at \$500,000. Of course, you can spend a great deal more. Crime is not an issue here and residents love their police officers. The biggest problem is theft from unlocked vehicles. The city is served by a variety of public and private schools, many of which have excellent ratings. Needless to say, the children in Vero Beach have access to an enriching, engaging educational environment wherever they look.

Vero Beach is home to the Mueller Campus for the Indian River State College, which was named one of the top ten best community colleges in the United States by the Aspen Institute in 2014. Other institutions nearby are the Palm Beach State College in Lake Worth, the University of Central Florida in Orlando (which is in the top 109 universities in the 2014 Academic Ranking of World Universities), and the Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton. Nearby specialty schools include Florida Institute of Technology and the Aviator College of Aeronautical Science and Technology.

Travel in Vero Beach is convenient, as it is served by GoLine bus routes and the Florida East Coast Railway. The Vero Beach Regional Airport is a public airport northwest of Vero Beach that offers limited commercial jet service. The city is also convenient to some of Florida's larger airports. Orlando International Airport is 90 minutes northwest and Palm Beach International Airport is about 90 minutes south. Both offer numerous carriers with plenty of travel deals for the air savvy. For those who like to cruise, Port

Canaveral is 90 minutes north and is the world's second largest cruise port.

Needless to say, Vero Beach has everything anyone could ever want. It is a very easy place to fall in love with so, if you are an outstanding city manager, dust off your resume and apply.

## HISTORY

The Vero Beach area was first settled in the 1880s. These early pioneers focused on fishing and growing citrus and vegetables. The arrival of the Florida East Coast Railway in 1893 brought the means to ship produce quickly to northern markets and signaled the beginning of serious growth.

The city of Vero Beach was then incorporated in 1919. Soon after, in 1925, the citizens successfully lobbied in Tallahassee for the creation of Indian River County, with the city as the county seat.

Vero Beach's development, much like the rest of Florida, followed the rise and fall of Florida's numerous land booms and busts. During World War II, the United States Military established a Naval Air station northeast of town. In 1947, the Brooklyn Dodgers selected the former Vero Beach Naval Air Station as their permanent Spring Training facility. Vero Beach also became the base of administrative and manufacturing operations for Piper Aircraft in 1961; Piper Aircraft has since become the largest private employer in the county.

The city itself developed gradually over time to its present population of just under 17,000. Not only has it become a popular tourist and winter home destination, it is also home to many retirees.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Table 1: Vero Beach Demographics

Estimated Population: 16,919			
Distribution by Race		Distribution by Age	
White	92.2%	0 to 15	10.4%
Black	3.8%	15 to 25	8.8%
Asian	0.9%	25 to 45	18.4%
Native American/ Pacific Islander	0.8%	45 to 65	34.9%
Two or More Races	2.3%	65 to 85	22.3%
Total	100%	Over 85	4.9%
Hispanic (all races)	9.4%		

Educational Achievement (over age 25)	
High School or Higher	95.5%
Bachelor’s Degree or Higher	34.4%

Other Statistics	
Median Age–Vero Beach	53.9
Median Age–U.S.	37.4
Poverty Rate	4.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

CLIMATE

The City of Vero Beach has a humid, subtropical climate, with an average annual temperature of 72.7°F. Most rainfall

tends to occur during the summer months and also is typically relatively short in duration. The seasons are not markedly different in temperature, with highs of around 74 °F degrees in the winter and 90 °F in the summer. The lows range from around 53 °F degrees in the winter to the mid-70’s in the summer. Temperatures below freezing are extremely rare.

Hurricanes strike the area from time to time, although their impact is generally limited. For example, if you are more than 50 miles from the storm’s center, it will probably not materially affect you. It should also be noted that a Category I hurricane produces winds from 75 to 95 miles per hour—not much faster than we routinely drive our cars.

GEOGRAPHY

The City of Vero Beach consists of 13.34 square miles, of which 11.44 is land. It is located on Florida’s east coast, about 190 miles south of Jacksonville and 135 miles north of Miami. Its average elevation is 13 feet above sea level.

COMMERCE

Vero Beach is the base of operations for the aviation manufacturer Piper Aircraft, which is the largest private employer in Indian River County. Aside from Piper Aircraft, much of the city’s success has centered around the tourism, citrus, and service industries. The largest tourist draw is The Disney Resort in Vero. See next page for the city's principal employers.

Table 2: Principal Employers

Employer	Industry	Employees
School District of Indian River County	Education	2,073
Indian River Medical Center	Healthcare	1,753
Publix Supermarkets	Retail	1,250
New Piper Aircraft, Inc	Manufacturing	904
Indian River County	Government	860
Walmart	Retail	693
Sebastian River Medical Center	Healthcare	595
John’s Island	Leisure	584
Medical Data Systems	Healthcare	500
Visiting Nurse Association	Healthcare	395

Source: Source: City of Vero Beach, FL, 2017 CAFR

THE GOVERNMENT

The City of Vero Beach operates under a Council-Manager form of government. The five members of the City Council serve two-year overlapping terms. All are elected at-large and the top two or three vote getters (depending on the number of seats to be considered) become members of the City Council. The Mayor is then selected by and from among the members of the body. Elections are held in November of each year. Due to a snafu, the November 2018 election was repeated in late February 2019. It had no impact on the outcome as the top three vote getters in November were also the top three in February.

Council Members are collegial and get along well, in spite of some philosophical differences. Once they have made a decision, they move on to the next issue. Nothing gets personal. They have a high regard for staff and generally do not attempt to interfere in the city’s day-to-day operations.

The Council appoints the City Manager along with the City Attorney, and the City Clerk.

The city provides all typical functions as well as the following services: the city marina, municipal airport, and water and sewer. In February of this year, it sold its electric utility to Florida Power and Light. The general fund expenditure budget is \$23,814,773 and the total budget is \$75,865,137. The city now has 209 FTEs in the

General Fund and another 105 in its enterprise funds. The employees are widely recognized as talented, competent, and dedicated. The City has four unions: the Teamsters Blue Collar, the Teamsters CT, the IUPA, and the PBA.

THE CITY ATTORNEY’S OFFICE

The City Attorney’s Office consists of four authorized positions: the City Attorney, two other attorneys and a paralegal. Now that the City has sold its electric utility, it is anticipated that one attorney position will no longer be needed. Currently, only one of the attorney positions in the office is permanently filled.

THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Vero Beach is one of the more complex local governments in Florida, and although the city is not facing any significant legal issues, the City Attorney should expect to be very busy.

Aside from the day-to-day matters, he/she will be asked to help ensure the city maintain its small-town character.

The challenge will take two forms. First will be redevelopment. One example is the sites of the city's power plant—which has been decommissioned—and wastewater treatment plant—which will likely be moved to the airport. Across the street from one another and on the Intracoastal Waterway, both properties are very valuable and will attract major re-development pressures. They are also subject to city charter requirement that the city's electors must give their approval before either property “can be “leased, traded, or given away.” Ensuring the future uses of the properties will help sustain the city's character will require strategic thinking and vigilance.

The second challenge to the community's character will come from pressure from the surrounding jurisdictions. As the only city in Indian River County with a true downtown and beaches, future development outside the city limits will only increase the pressure on the city. By way of reference, the nearby city of Fellsmere (57.7 square miles) is the 13th largest city in Florida by land area, yet currently only has a population of a little under 6,000. As the population of that and other areas grow, more people will undoubtedly be attracted to Vero Beach. Mitigating the impact will require creativity throughout the city government.

The other long term issue the attorney will be involved in is protecting the Indian River Lagoon (part of the Intracoastal Waterway). It is a large part of the city's ambiance and a natural wonder.

## THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

Vero Beach is seeking an attorney to lead its legal efforts. The individual will partner with elected officials and staff to solve problems while also being a supporter and a trusted advisor. The individual will understand politics, but not be involved in them. The City Attorney will give all five members of the Commission same information and keep them all equally and well informed.

The ideal candidate will be knowledgeable and responsive. When he/she does not know the answer, the individual will promptly conduct the necessary research, and provide the correct answer. The City Council is not looking for a “yes” man or woman—meaning the next City Attorney will be comfortable telling the City Council what it needs to know, not what it wants to hear. That said, the best candidate will recognize there is a time and place for everything and a City Council meeting may not always be the best venue.

The City Attorney will be open minded and actively seek ways to “get the City where it wants to go.” The emphasis is on being facilitative rather than prescriptive; that is, working with people to accomplish their ends (within the law) and on helping people get things done, without being a hindrance. The appropriate response to a staff member will be, “Well, we really can't do X but if we do Y, we can get you to where you want to be.” Simply stated, it will be important for the candidate to aggressively seek solutions and focused on helping move the City forward.

The best candidate will have outstanding communications and interpersonal skills. Vero Beach is a small town and a relatively small government. As such, the City Attorney



will interact with a wide variety of people from diverse backgrounds, disciplines, and economic strata. He/she will need to be open and approachable. Excellent listening skills are critical. Again, as Vero Beach is a small government, it will be essential that the City Attorney be viewed as cooperative, and easy to work with. That said, the individual will exhibit independent judgment.

Personally, the best candidate will be someone who is intelligent, upbeat, friendly, outgoing, organized, positive and proactive—someone with a can-do attitude. He/she will be resolute yet flexible, consistent, cheerfully persistent, and high energy. The individual will not dawdle when making decisions and exhibit the highest level of professionalism, ethics, and dedication.

The City Attorney will be a strong manager, who is as comfortable overseeing day-to-day operations as practicing the law. He/she will understand and have experience with budgets, staff management and setting priorities.

The ideal candidate will be a mentor and focus on developing staff. He/she will recognize the importance of building a strong, pro-active and dynamic team within the office. The individual will be fair and have a sense of humor.

As Vero Beach is the county seat of Indian River County, and the city must deal with a wide variety of local, state and federal agencies, the



ideal candidate will have strong experience in intergovernmental relations.

The position requires a Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree and licensure to practice law in Florida. Ten years of increasingly responsible experience in the practice of law is expected as well as experience in management. The best candidate will have experience across the spectrum of municipal law with particular expertise in redevelopment.

The selected candidate will be expected to make a commitment to Vero Beach. This position should not be viewed as a stepping stone but as a gem in its own right.

## RECIPROCITY

Florida does not have reciprocity with any other state. Further, the City Charter requires the Attorney to be a member of the Florida Bar. Hence, it is imperative that candidates already be licensed to practice law in Florida.



## COMPENSATION

The salary range is \$105,000 to \$140,000 with a target salary of \$125,000. Actual salary will depend on qualifications and experience. Benefits are excellent.

## THE MOST RECENT CITY ATTORNEY

The more recent City Attorney recently retired after a 40+ year career.

## RESIDENCY

Under the city charter, the City Attorney is not required to live within the city's boundaries. As a practical matter, who would want to live anywhere else?

## HOW TO APPLY

E-mail your cover letter and resume to [Recruit24@cb-asso.com](mailto:Recruit24@cb-asso.com) by April 1st. Faxed and mailed resumes will not be considered. Questions should be directed to Colin Baenziger at (561) 707-3537 or David Collier at (772) 220-4320.

## INTERNAL CANDIDATES

The City is committed to a fair and open process. The playing field is truly level. That said, the Interim City Attorney has stated she plans to apply.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Under the Florida Public Records Act, all applicants are subject to disclosure upon receipt. As a practical matter, we do not expect extensive coverage until after semi-finalists are named.

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The fact that Vero Beach is looking for a City Manager and a City Attorney is entirely coincidental.

The city is an Equal Opportunity Employer and encourages women and minorities to apply. A veteran's preference will be awarded per Florida law. For additional information about the city, visit:

<https://www.covb.org/>

<http://verobeach100.com>

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EXECUTIVE RECRUITING