



City of Oceanside

300 North Coast Highway,
Oceanside, California 92054

Staff Report

File #: 25-620

Agenda Date: 2/19/2025

Agenda #: 16.

DATE: February 19, 2025

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers

FROM: City Attorney's Office

**TITLE: APPROVAL OF THE ADDITION OF A CHIEF ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY
CLASSIFICATION AND MODIFY THE CURRENT AUTHORIZED ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY
POSITION**

RECOMMENDATION

Staff requests the City Council approve the addition of a Chief Assistant City Attorney classification and modify the current authorized Assistant City Attorney position to Chief Assistant City Attorney position within the City Attorney's Office and establish a salary range for the new classification. There is no budget impact for FY 2024-25. In the subsequent years, this will increase the General Fund ongoing cost by approximately \$29,000 annually, plus any regular salary increases.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

With the recent retirement of the City's longest-serving City Attorney, the City Attorney's Office is actively reviewing organizational structure and back-filling a current vacancy. As part of this process, the need for a new Chief Assistant City Attorney classification was identified.

When fully staffed, the City Attorney's Office is comprised of nine employees; six of which are currently budgeted as full-time attorneys, one senior paralegal, and two senior legal secretaries. While there is cross-over in tasking and functions, the City Attorney's Office is generally organized into three divisions: 1) civil litigation; 2) advisory/transactional; and 3) police and code enforcement matters, including prosecutions under the Oceanside City Code, all of which are overseen by the City Attorney.

With the exception of the City Attorney who is appointed directly by the City Council, the existing classifications for attorney staff in the City Attorney's Office are Assistant City Attorney, Senior Deputy City Attorney, and Deputy City Attorney. Entering FY 24/25, the City Attorney's Office was budgeted for and staffed with one City Attorney, three Assistant City Attorneys, and two Senior Deputy City Attorneys. As of the date of this report, the office has one City Attorney, one Assistant City Attorney and three Senior Deputy City Attorneys, with one position vacant. Each position is "unclassified" and is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the City Attorney.

This request will create a new Chief Assistant City Attorney classification between the City Attorney and Assistant City Attorney level which would be filled internally. The proposed Chief Assistant

position would serve as the principal assistant to the City Attorney, assist in the management and direction of the City Attorney's Office, and act as the primary legal advisor to multiple municipal departments, officers and specified employees.

FISCAL IMPACT

The annual base salary range for the new classification is proposed to be between \$177,960 and \$256,380, plus fringe, based on the median of a survey of comparable positions from other local agencies.

The FY 2024-25 budget for the current Assistant City Attorney position (PCN MG36CA01) is \$340,973. The estimated fully burdened cost for the new position is \$369,986. There is enough salary savings within the Department to absorb this increase for the remaining four months of FY 2024-25. In the subsequent years, this will increase the General Fund ongoing cost by approximately \$29,000 annually, plus any regular salary increases.

COMMISSION OR COMMITTEE REPORT

None applicable.

CITY ATTORNEY'S ANALYSIS

Does not apply.

Prepared by: T. Steven Burke, Jr., City Attorney
Submitted by: Jonathan Borrego, City Manager