



# Legal Services Review Advisory Group

## Overview

The City of Takoma Park issues contracts for various legal services. While the City Attorney's Office provides general legal services on a day to-day basis, the City also utilizes other counsel for specialized legal services associated with labor and personnel matters, development issues, the Police Pension Plan, and other needs as they arise. The current contract with the City Attorney began in February 2015 and can be renewed for up to five additional one-year terms, through 2020. All other contracts are due to be competitively bid or otherwise renewed.

## Primary Objective

Recently, the City has experienced an increased need for legal services, as well as a broader range of legal expertise. The primary objective of the Legal Services Review Advisory Group is to 1) review and document the City's legal service needs currently and what we expect in near future, the manner in which those needs are currently being met, advantages and disadvantages of the existing structure and processes, and 2) provide recommendations to the City Council for how to meet the City's legal service needs in the future.

## Specific Tasks

To be completed by February 1, 2019:

- Identify the City's legal services needs now and in the near future; look for and present possible new opportunities for utilizing legal services in ways they are not currently available or being considered
- Review and document how the existing arrangement for legal services is meeting or not adequately meeting identified needs (where are there gaps?)
- Interview current Councilmembers regarding their perspectives and legal services needs
- Interview staff members who frequently interact with the City's legal service providers in the course of their work regarding their perspectives and legal services needs
- Gather comparative information on various options and arrangements for legal services
- Develop recommended approaches for Council's consideration for most effectively and efficiently meeting legal services needs

## Composition

- Former Councilmember with experience working with the City Attorney
- Three residents appointed by the Council; each resident should have a demonstrated background in one or more of the following areas: the field of law, familiarity with at least one area of the City's legal needs (contracts, finance, personnel, land use and development, etc.), and/or experience serving on a Council committee
- Staff liaison

## Resources

- The role of the staff member assigned to the advisory group is to provide information regarding the existing arrangements for legal services, including but not limited to contracts and financial information, and to coordinate between other group members, Councilmembers, and staff as appropriate.