



CITY ATTORNEY

Executive (Legal) Department

Annual Salary:
\$163,279

Carlsbad, New Mexico

Are you an experienced attorney who can safeguard a fast-growing energy hub's legal interests, guide elected officials, and lead a small but high-impact legal team? If so, apply to become Carlsbad's next City Attorney!

We are searching for an approachable, solutions-oriented advisor who is:

- Versed in municipal or governmental law
- Adept at drafting and negotiating complex contracts and ordinances
- A confident courtroom advocate and collaborative executive partner

Carlsbad—A Place to Live, Work, & Play! – read on to learn more about this opportunity.

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY

Carlsbad is a dynamic, growing city of 31,999 residents nestled along the Pecos River in southeastern New Mexico's Permian Basin. Fueled by potash mining, oil & gas, nuclear research, and a flourishing tourism sector anchored by world-renowned Carlsbad Caverns National Park, the city blends small-town charm with global energy expertise.

Located just 25 miles from the Carlsbad Caverns and 140 miles northeast of El Paso, Carlsbad offers year-round sunshine, riverfront recreation, and family-friendly festivals such as the Christmas on the Pecos and CavernFest. Settled in the late 1800s as a health resort, Carlsbad today features a revitalized downtown, robust infrastructure investments, and a regional airport.



POPULATION

31,999



MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

\$78,277



MEDIAN HOME VALUE

\$187,900

AVERAGE MONTHLY RENT

\$1,206

Tourism & Activities



GOVERNANCE & ORGANIZATION

Carlsbad operates under a Mayor-Council system with a professional City Administrator. The Mayor and eight Councilors are elected by district to four-year staggered terms with no term limits. The City delivers a full slate of services with over 500 professional staff, including:

- Public Safety (Police & Fire)
- Utilities & Public Works
- Community Development, Parks & Recreation



ABOUT THE JOB

The Executive Department's Legal Division safeguards Carlsbad's legal and ethical integrity, providing civil counsel, contract review, ordinance drafting, and representation in all judicial and administrative forums.

Reporting to the City Administrator, the new City Attorney will:

- Serve as chief legal advisor to the Mayor, Council, Administrator, and City departments
- Draft, review, and approve ordinances, resolutions, contracts, and real-property instruments
- Represent the City in litigation and coordinate outside counsel as needed
- Monitor legislative/regulatory changes and ensure compliance city-wide
- Lead and mentor a four-person legal/administrative team while managing a \$3.7 million division budget

DEPARTMENT QUICK FACTS



EMPLOYEES

4



DEPT. BUDGET

\$3.7
MILLION

KEY PROJECTS FOR 2025

- WATER-RIGHTS PROTECTION AND RELATED LITIGATION STRATEGY
- COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF CITY ORDINANCES



THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate is an accomplished attorney with local government law experience. A persuasive communicator and ethical advisor, they build consensus across politically diverse stakeholders, translate complex legal concepts into plain English, and balance risk mitigation with pragmatic problem-solving. Calm under pressure, and they thrive in the courtroom, council-chamber, and community settings; model transparency and accountability; mentor emerging legal talent; and embrace Carlsbad residency to immerse themselves in community life.

EXPERIENCE & QUALIFICATIONS

Required:

- Juris Doctor from an ABA-accredited law school
- Minimum 7 years' legal practice, including 4 years in municipal/government law and 3 years supervisory experience
- Applicants must hold a current law license in good standing and meet the eligibility requirements for admission to the New Mexico Bar through reciprocity or admission on motion pursuant to New Mexico Rules Governing Admission to the Bar.
- Ability to obtain New Mexico driver's license & establish City residency within six months

Preferred:

- Significant oil & gas or natural-resources law background
- Experience advising Mayor-Council jurisdictions
- Advanced training in public-sector labor, procurement, and land-use law



SALARY & BENEFITS

- **Compensation:** \$163,279
- **Insurance:** Medical, dental, vision, and life insurance
- **PTO:** 21 hours personal leave per month + 13 paid holidays
- **Retirement:** PERA defined-benefit plan — 9.16 % employee / 19.20 % employer contributions
- **Wellness: Optional** \$15-per-month gym subsidy
- **Relocation:** Assistance provided for out-of-area hires
- **Vehicle and cell phone allowances:** City vehicle stipend and cell-phone allowance for directors

HOW TO APPLY

Apply Here



For more information on this position, contact:

Andy Kancel, Sr. Vice President of Executive Recruitment

andykancel@governmentresource.com | 817-994-6295

The City of Carlsbad is an Equal Opportunity Employer and values diversity in its workforce. Applicants selected as finalists for this position will be subject to a comprehensive background check.