



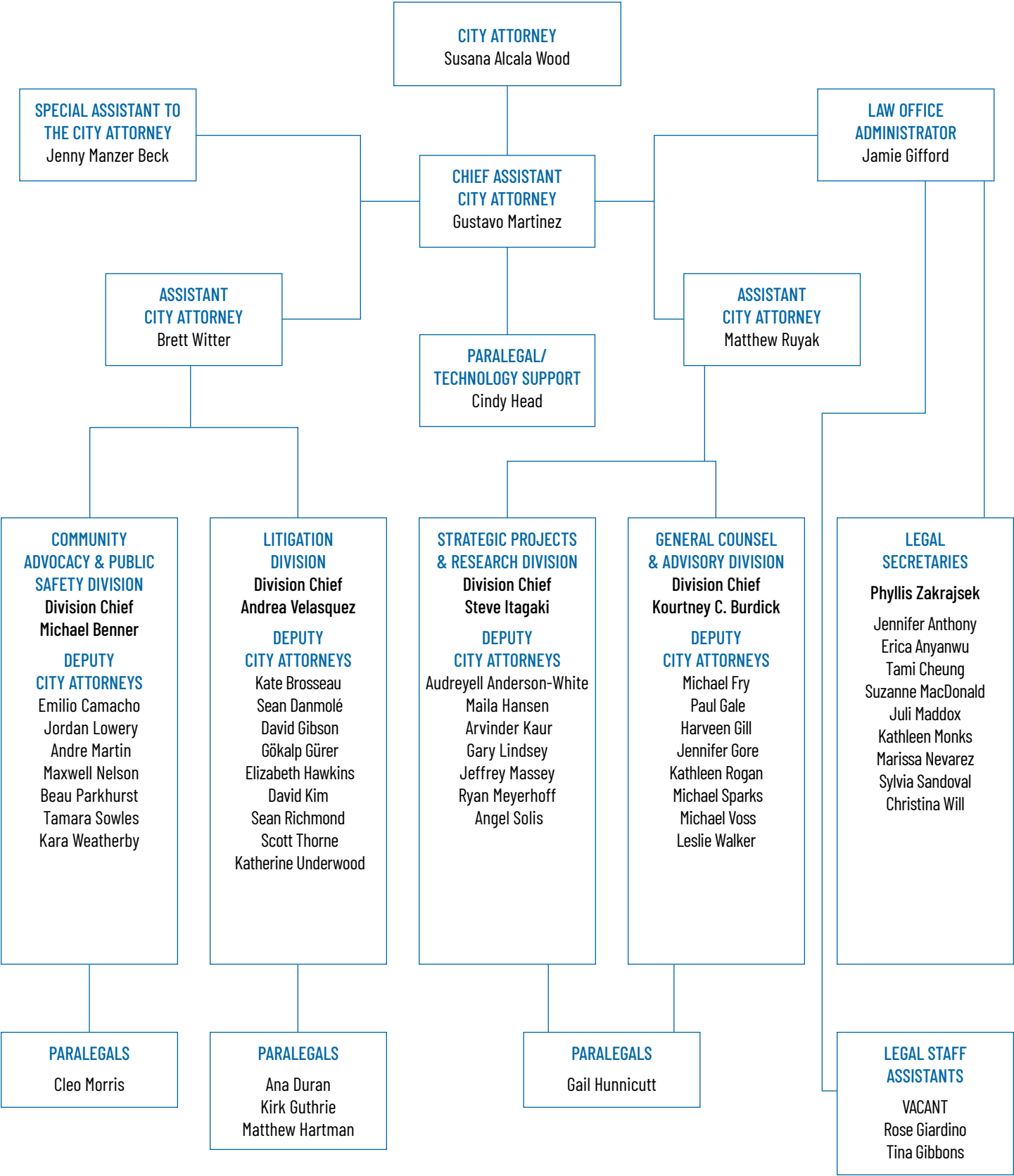
OFFICE OF THE CITY ATTORNEY
CITY OF SACRAMENTO
ANNUAL REPORT
2024-2025



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CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE ORGANIZATION CHART



CITY ATTORNEY'S MESSAGE

MESSAGE FROM CITY ATTORNEY SUSANA ALCALA WOOD

I am pleased to present this annual report that sets forth in detail a description and accounting of the legal matters our Office has handled over the prior 12 months. These matters include litigation, legal research and advice provided, ordinance research and drafting, transactional work, prosecution and enforcement work and legal support on key strategic initiatives. We have also endeavored to highlight key matters and cases we worked on as a sample of the broad spectrum of work generated by the Sacramento City Attorney's Office.

Executive Summary

The Office's annual budget for FY 24-25 was \$14,771,281, supporting a staff of more than 60 dedicated employees including attorneys, paralegals and support staff. Significantly, work this year was accomplished with several vacancies created by multiple retirements of long-serving staff. These vacancies resulted in existing staff taking on more assignments and working collaboratively as needed to get the work done, as well as careful prioritization by our administrative team to ensure the continued delivery of core legal services to the City Council, Charter Offices, Departments, Boards, and Commissions.

Legal Advice and Counsel: On a daily basis, we conduct in-depth legal research to provide expert legal advice and counsel regarding the application of federal, state and local laws to all City operations. Attorneys also provide legal advice and counsel on all existing f the City's policies, ordinances, agreements, programs, projects, services, and organizational/operational matters.

Representation of the City and its Officers and Employees in Litigation: We continued to diligently and expertly defend the city against all claims and lawsuits. To control costs, we handle the bulk of litigation in-house. This strategy not only preserves taxpayer dollars but also leverages the specialized knowledge of our team, which is deeply familiar with the City's legal and operational environment.

Community Advocacy and Public Safety: Through our department enforcement efforts including criminal prosecution, and our Justice for Neighbors program, we diligently work throughout the City to address physical and social nuisances that create significant health and safety concerns for businesses, neighborhoods, and the community. We continually seek opportunities to collaborate with City departments and other public agencies to address and resolve these community challenges together.

Strategic Projects: We work hand-in-hand with council members and City staff on high-priority projects to advance efforts to create more economic opportunities, enhance amenities and services for residents, and respond to high-profile and sensitive matters such as addressing the effects of homelessness.

Gold Seal from State Bar of California for Office Diversity efforts

We recognize the significant role the CAO serves in providing legal advice to the City Council, city officials, city employees, departments and all city boards and commissions. Accordingly, the CAO holds itself to the highest standards and obligations to ensure that the department represents the community and meets the Council's expectations set forth in its Racial Equity Resolution. In a year when we had to do more with less, I am especially proud of the Office's Gold Seal award from the California State Bar in recognition of our proven efforts toward advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in all operations of the office. Our strategic objective remains steadfast: to fundamentally implement processes that seek to grow our talented team through more inclusionary employment practices. We firmly believe that diversity improves and informs our advice and enhances the legal counsel we provide to the City.

It remains a privilege to serve as City Attorney for Sacramento and to advocate, uphold and advance the city's legal rights, and obligations for the benefit of all residents and persons who work, visit and do business in this great City.



CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE ADMINISTRATION TEAM

The administration and general support functions of the office are performed under the direction of the City Attorney. The Administration Team is City Attorney Susana Alcalá Wood; Chief Assistant City Attorney Gustavo L. Martinez; Assistant City Attorneys Matthew D. Ruyak and Brett M. Witter; Supervising Deputy City Attorneys Kourtney C. Burdick, Steve Y. Itagaki, Michael J. Benner, and Andrea M. Velasquez; Law Office Administrator Jamie Gifford; and Special Assistant to the City Attorney Jenny Manzer Beck.

The Administration Team strives to maintain a work environment that inspires excellence and creativity, while rewarding productivity. We promote career enhancement with ongoing training and staff development. The office provides staff the opportunity to obtain needed credits for Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE), as well as other professional-association seminars. The Administration Team develops and implements office policies and procedures; monitors overall office performance and individual performance; prepares and administers the office budget; handles all personnel hiring and other personnel matters; assembles and analyzes office productivity data, including production of an annual report; and engages in long-range and succession planning. Together the team prioritizes the establishment and maintenance of relationships and trust with the City Council and their staff, public commissions, and valued City departments, officers, and city staff.



OFFICE OVERVIEW OPERATIONS AND OBJECTIVES

The office’s annual budget for FY 24-25 was \$14,771,281 and funded a staff of 64 employees who provide critical legal advice and counsel to the city council, charter offices, departments, boards, and commissions. The office also handles the bulk of litigation matters involving the city and prosecute violations of the Sacramento City Code.

The City Attorney’s budget includes a fixed annual revenue amount of \$52,000. That budgeted amount is recovered primarily from services billed to the Sacramento Public Library Authority, as well as other fees and charges recoverable to the City Attorney from the Citywide Fee and Charge Schedule.

The City Attorney also received an additional \$14,600 for services rendered to the Sacramento Public Library Authority in excess of the services delivered as part of the fixed annual amount. Pursuant to Council Resolution No. 2020-0227, these funds were set aside in the City Attorney’s technology capital improvement project (CIP), which is used as the primary source for new computer hardware when end-of-lifecycle equipment is replaced.

In addition to the revenue figures above, the City Attorney recognized a total of \$20,789 in revenue under Council

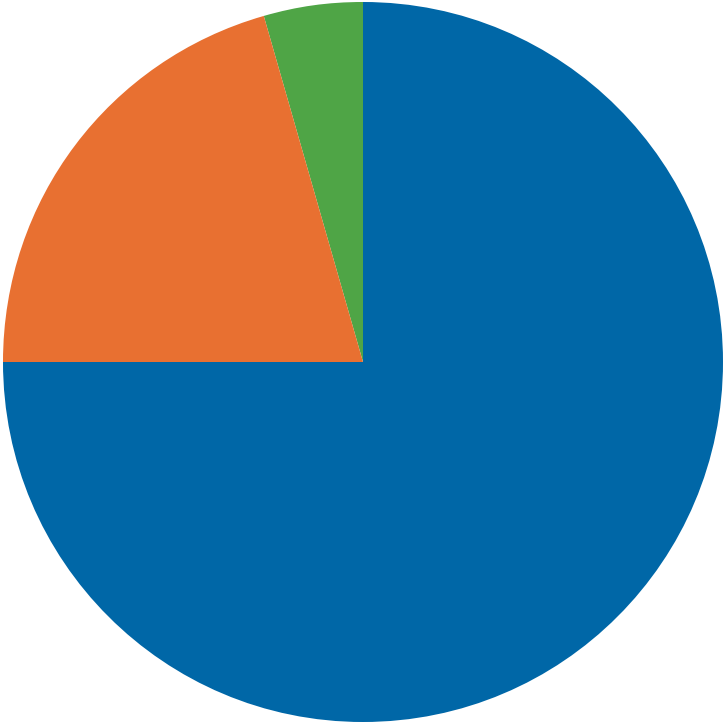
Resolution No. 2009-164 (Justice for Neighbors Multi-Year Operating Project). Those funds were set aside in the JFN MYOP, which is used to provide resources to the City to combat quality-of-life-issues under the City’s social nuisance code.

Objectives for FY2025/26

- Inform and advise the council and City departments regarding Presidential actions, including Executive Orders, and Memorandums, and commencing litigation to protect the City from the federal government’s threat to terminate federal funding of existing grants.
- Assist the council and city manager with budget savings through increased efficiencies in the City Attorney’s Office.
- Provide citywide training through CityYOU courses to include Public Records Act, public contracting, First Amendment issues, and the Brown Act.

Operating Budget for FY 2024–2025
Total: \$14,771,281

- \$11,520,990 General Fund
- \$2,652,049 Interdepartmental Funds
- \$598,242 Enterprise or other funding



DEPARTMENT EFFICIENCIES

- Optimized budget savings by keeping vacant positions open.
- Conducted trials of legal research tools that would provide significant savings over current platform to address ongoing budget reductions for FY25-26.
- Contracted for the destruction of over 2,140 cubic feet of case files and other office records that were past retention, creating a net savings of \$70,000 over the next 7 years.

SERVICE-DELIVERY PRIORITIES ACHIEVED IN 2024

- Carried through with process put in place to enhance the office diversity, equity, and inclusion goals designed to improve internal commitment for recruitment and hiring, outreach to the community, and operations within the City Attorney's Office.
- Proceeded with advising the council, and city departments regarding recent changes to cannabis laws and regulations, and the ongoing development of the Cannabis Opportunity Reinvestment and Equity program.
- Assisted the council, city auditor, and city manager with interpretation and implementation of Measure L (Sacramento Children & Youth Health and Safety Act).
- Continued to defend the City's legal interests in court and in administrative proceedings and initiate legal action and other initiatives to protect and advance the rights, interests, and quality of life of our community, and to ensure justice and equity.
- Provided citywide training through CityYOU on the Public Records Act.
- Continued supporting the City's pursuit of racial and social justice and racial equity through ongoing support for the Police Department and the Office of Public Safety Accountability, by working to increase the public's oversight of its Police Department, and by helping to reimagine and retool the City's delivery of public safety services.
- Retained a staff of highly qualified and dedicated attorneys and support staff with extensive knowledge of the City of Sacramento and municipal law, to deliver high-quality legal services and advice more efficiently and effectively.

LEGISLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Each year the Sacramento City Council adopts dozens of ordinances, most of which get incorporated into the published Sacramento City Code (SCC). Not only are ordinances fundamental statements of public policy, they create the legal framework for city government operations, economic activity in the city, the rights and responsibilities of citizens, and promote the public health, safety, and welfare.

To ensure the council's ordinances are constitutional, enforceable, consistent with state law and the rest of the Sacramento City Code, understandable, and accurate reflections of the council's public policy intentions, the City

Attorney's Office has a process for the drafting and vetting of proposed ordinances. Key to that process is thorough review by a small group of seasoned attorneys who meet frequently for that vetting.

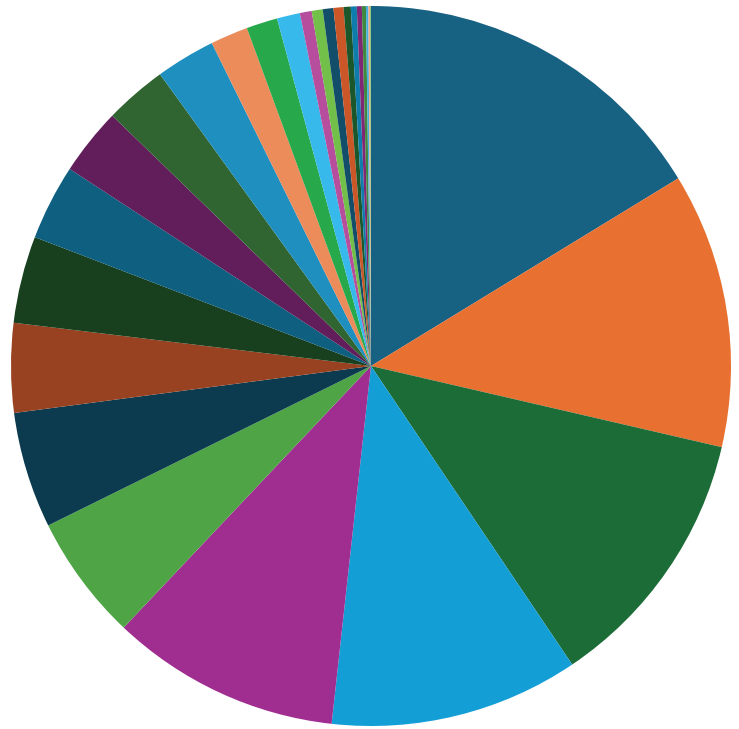
That group, the Draft Ordinance Review Committee, met 26 times in fiscal year 2023/2024. Among the notable ordinances drafted and reviewed are the following:

NOTABLE ORDINANCES

- The “Missing Middle Housing Interim Ordinance,” which updated the City’s planning and development standards to broaden the range of housing types allowed by-right within the single-unit and duplex dwelling residential zones.
- A major overhaul of various board and commission chapters in SCC title 2, to create consistency across boards and commissions regarding their scope, duties, member qualifications and appointment, and meeting protocols.
- Several cannabis-related ordinances, including regulation of consumption lounges, storefront cannabis dispensaries, and land-use regulations.
- Amending SCC chapter 5.108, to allow for “limited entertainment permits,” providing an alternative for smaller businesses to provide entertainment without extensive costs, application process, and other requirements.
- Amending various sections of SCC chapter 15.154, relating to universal design (accessibility standards) for residential dwellings.
- Amending various provisions of SCC title 17 (Planning and Development Code), including streamlining the approval process for review of lots with less than ten dwellings, encouraging special needs housing, and eliminating off-street vehicle parking requirements for new and existing developments.

CAO Legal Assignments by Department
Total: 8,977 Assignments

1,525	16%	Public Works
1,157	12%	Utilities
1,119	12%	City Manager
1,048	11%	Police
966	10%	Criminal Prosecution
529	6%	Parks & Recreation
489	5%	Convention and Cultural Services
375	4%	Community Development
366	4%	Finance
318	3%	Other
283	3%	Fire
262	3%	Human Resources
251	3%	City Clerk
158	2%	City Attorney
131	1%	Committee and Commission Assignments
97	1%	Library Authority
50	1%	City Treasurer
46	<1%	Labor Relations
45	<1%	IT
42	<1%	Community Response
30	<1%	All Council
25	<1%	YPCE
21	<1%	City Auditor
17	<1%	Ethics
10	<1%	Economic Development
8	<1%	Mayor
3	<1%	Ann Land/Bertha Henschel Memorial Fund



LITIGATION DIVISION

The Litigation Division defends and prosecutes civil litigation cases on behalf of the City and its officers and employees acting in the course and scope of employment; and provides legal support to Risk Management. Division attorneys work in all areas of municipal law including civil rights, personal injury, property damage, construction defect, eminent domain, breach of contract, employment, and CEQA. Division attorneys provide litigation services in arbitration, civil and administrative proceedings in both state and federal courts.

The City benefits from a robust litigation division comprised of nine deputy city attorneys and the division Chief. During this time period, the division opened 174 new cases and sent only 4 to outside counsel. Keeping the vast majority of cases in house provides millions of dollars in savings to the City.

NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

Case No. 1

The City initiated litigation against A. Teichert and Sons, Inc. for non-compliant and deficient work on the Accelerated Water Meter Program concerning water meter retrofit work and water main installations. The parties reached a settlement agreement allowing the Department of Utilities to collect \$13.4 million.

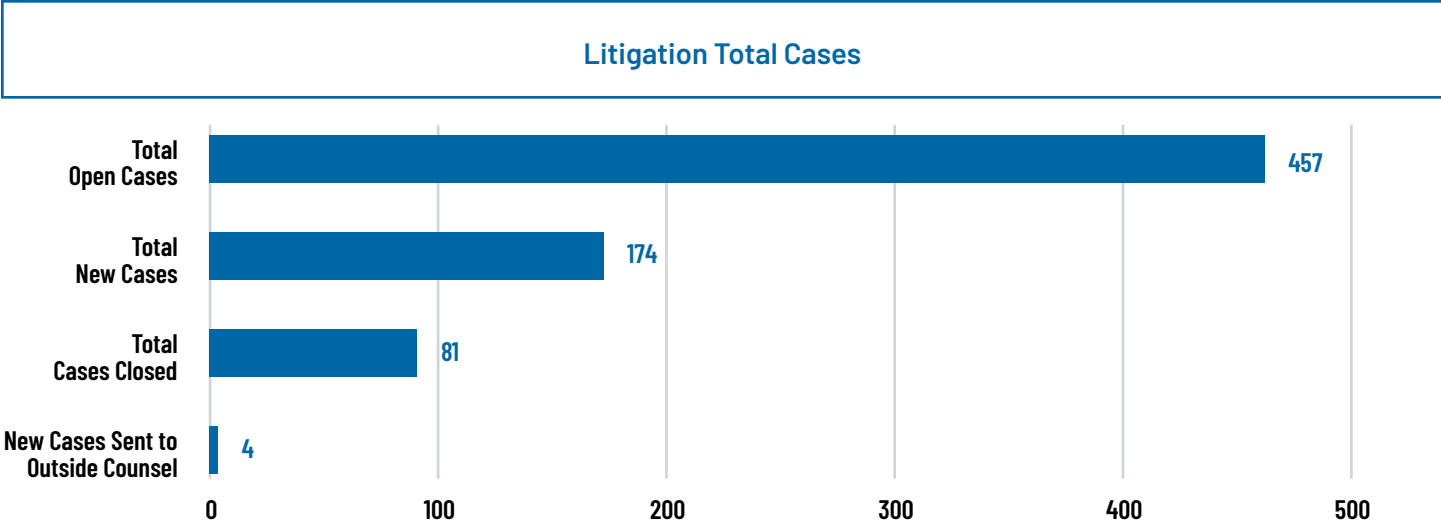
Case No. 2

This inverse condemnation matter involved a property owner who filed litigation against the City claiming that the West Broadway Specific Plan adopted by the City in 2020 required him to complete a roadway dedication for a portion of his property and caused him to reduce the

price of his property in a sale to a housing developer to account for the loss of 25% of the building area. We filed a motion to dismiss for lack of subject matter jurisdiction as plaintiff’s developmental application is still pending. The Court granted the motion to dismiss.

Case No. 3

Plaintiff alleged an equal rights violation and law enforcement interference when his access to public baseball fields were infringed. The City successfully moved to have plaintiff deemed a vexatious litigant in the US District Court Eastern District of California, and his case was dismissed.



Case No. 4

This matter involved a fatal officer-involved shooting in a parking garage where the decedent refused to put down a firearm and was brandishing it at officers. The City filed a demurrer to the complaint on standing issues and the case was dismissed.

Case No. 5

This matter involved a commercial cannabis business alleging the City was improperly denying their building permits. The City negotiated a dismissal of the case by coordinating with staff to facilitate resolution for the outstanding building permit disputes.

Presentations

IMLA Annual Conference – Recovery of Attorney’s Fees in Civil Rights Litigation, presented by Andrea Velasquez

Cal Cities Annual Conference – Public Entity Litigation Update, presented by Sean Richmond

Cal Cities Mid-Year Conference – Public Entity Litigation Update, presented by Andrea Velasquez and Sean Richmond

Officer Involved Shootings and Death in Custody Response Team

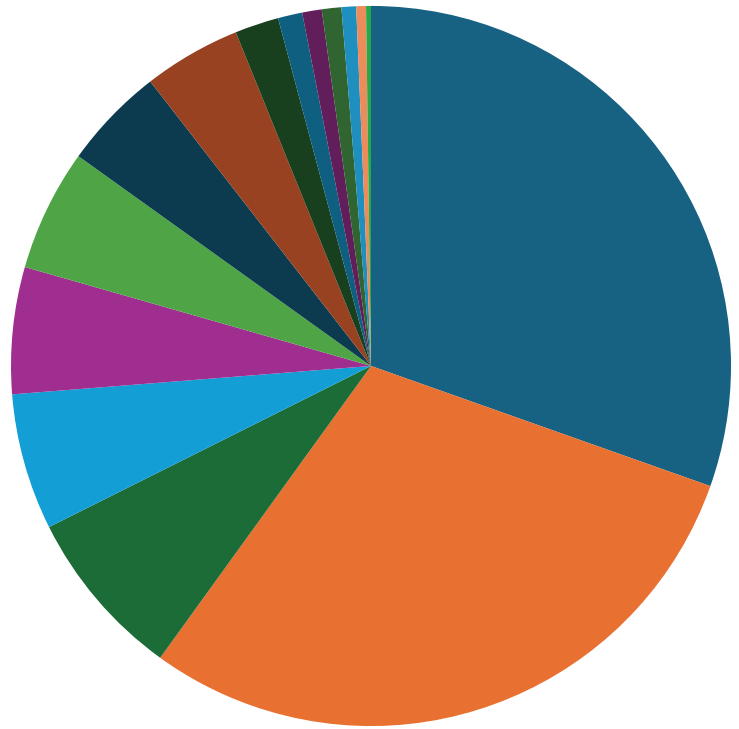
Pursuant to direction of the City Manager and City Attorney, the City Attorney’s Office is one of the teams that is notified and responds to officer-involved shootings, and in custody death incidents. The City Attorney’s Office Response Team is comprised of Deputy City Attorneys and supervised by the Litigation Division Chief. The purpose of the CAO Response Team is to provide the City Attorney with real-time information on these critical incidents and an immediate liability analysis for the Police Department, City Attorney, Mayor, and Council.

Creation of CAO Justice League

In response to the federal administration’s threats to cut funding to sanctuary jurisdictions, the Litigation Division created a sub-division dubbed the Justice League to organize and defend the City against all threats to City’s funding from the Trump Administration.

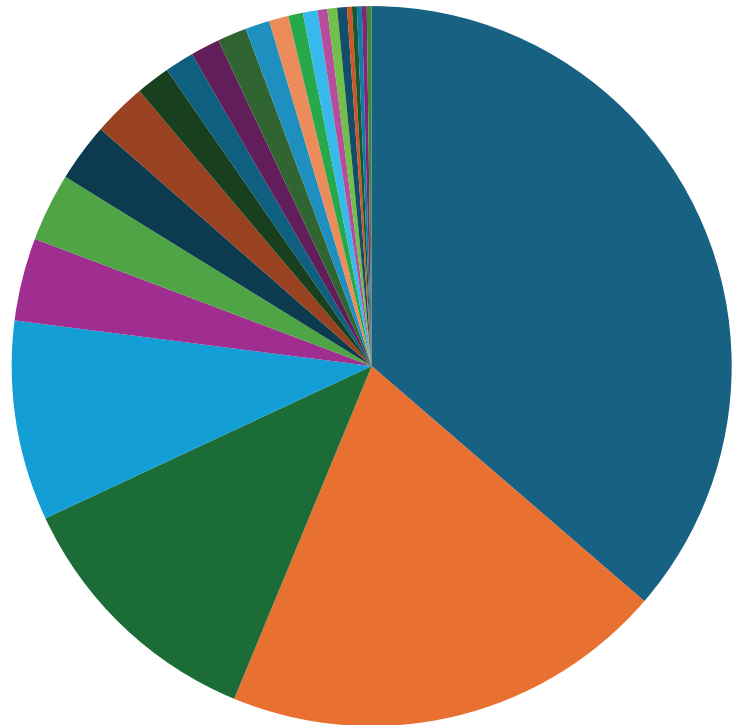
Litigation Total Cases by Department
Total: 457 Total Cases

139	30%	Public Works
135	30%	Police
35	8%	City Manager
28	6%	Community Development
26	6%	Human Resources
25	5%	YPCE
21	5%	Utilities
20	5%	Labor Relations
9	2%	Fire
5	1%	Convention Cultural Services
4	1%	City Clerk
4	1%	Finance
3	1%	All Council Districts
2	<1%	Community Response
1	<1%	IT



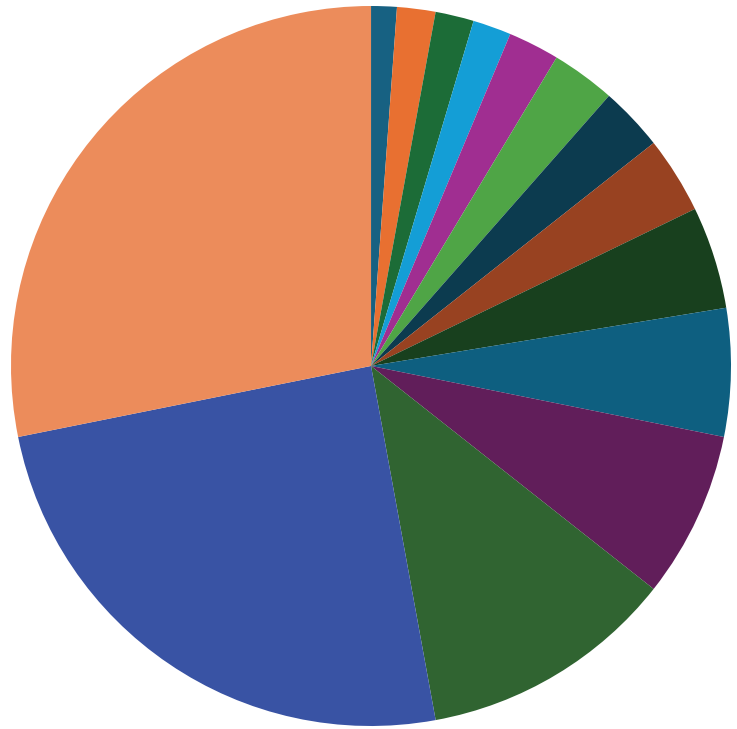
Litigation Total Cases by Matter Type
Total: 457 New Cases

166	36%	Tort	2	<1%	Inverse Condemnation
91	20%	Litigation Review	2	<1%	Unfair Labor Practice
54	12%	Civil Rights	2	<1%	Unlawful Detainer
41	9%	Writ	1	<1%	Bankruptcy
17	4%	Discipline	1	<1%	Code Enforcement
14	3%	EEO	1	<1%	Collections
12	3%	Lien	1	<1%	Environmental
11	2%	Appeals	1	<1%	Injunctions
7	2%	Retirement			
6	1%	Contract			
6	1%	Subpoena			
6	1%	Subrogation			
5	1%	Eminent Domain			
4	1%	Grievance			
3	1%	PRA			
3	1%	TRO			



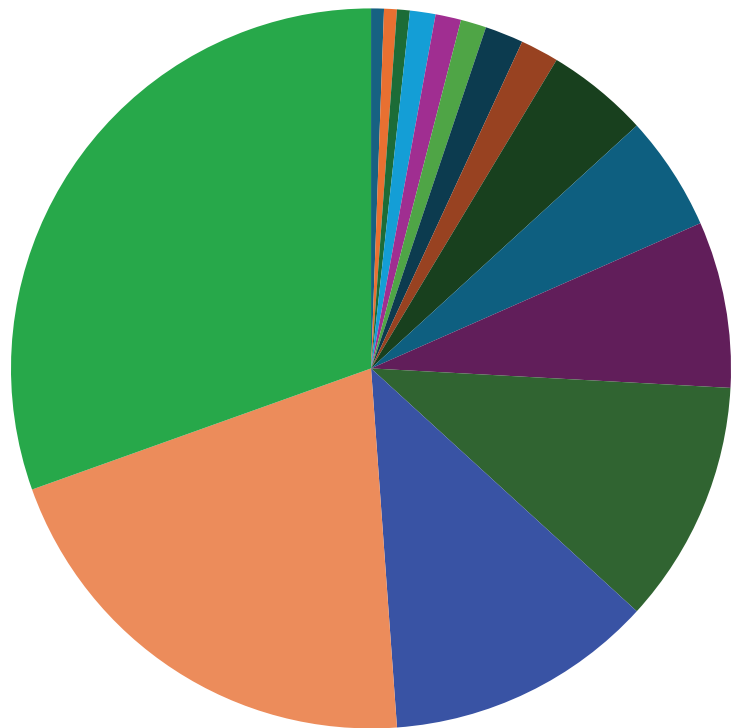
Litigation New Cases by Department
Total: 174 New Cases

49	28%	Public Works
43	25%	Police
20	11%	Human Resources
13	7%	Human Resources - Discipline
10	6%	Utilities
8	5%	Parks and Recreation
6	3%	Labor Relations
5	3%	Community Development
5	3%	Fire
4	2%	City Clerk's Office
3	2%	Other
3	2%	City Manager's Office
3	2%	Convention and Cultural Services
2	1%	Finance



Litigation New Cases by Matter Type
Total: 174 New Cases

53	30%	Tort/Appeal
36	21%	Litigation Monitoring
21	12%	Discipline Review
19	11%	Civil Rights
13	7%	Employment
9	5%	Discipline
8	5%	Subrogation-Collection
3	2%	PRA
3	2%	Writ
2	1%	Property
2	1%	Subpoena
2	1%	TRO/Injunction
1	1%	Code Enforcement Litigation
1	1%	Contract
1	1%	Eminent Domain



STRATEGIC PROJECTS AND RESEARCH

The Strategic Projects and Research Division provides legal advice on projects initiated by the City Council or that require multi-departmental coordination. SPR attorneys also provide legal advice to the City Council, charter offices, and city departments.

NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

Affordable Housing

Assisted the Office of Innovation and Economic Development in establishing the City’s new street-to-housing program, which utilized \$5 million in state funding to house 100 homeless households currently residing along the Sacramento Northern Parkway in Council District 2.

Greenbriar Community Facilities District Special Tax Bonds

Advised the City Treasurer on the \$36 million bond issuance to finance the costs of acquisition and construction of public facilities in Council District 1, including improvements for schools, utilities, roadways, landscaping, and parks.

Cannabis Consumption Lounges

Advised the Office of Cannabis Management on the development of regulations for smoking and non-smoking cannabis consumption lounges at storefront cannabis dispensary sites.

Limited Entertainment Permits

Assisted the Office of Nighttime Economy on amending the Sacramento City Code to create a new limited entertainment permit that will enable small businesses to provide entertainment, increase the vibrancy of

our commercial corridors citywide, and create more opportunities for local musicians and other entertainers.

EMS Corps

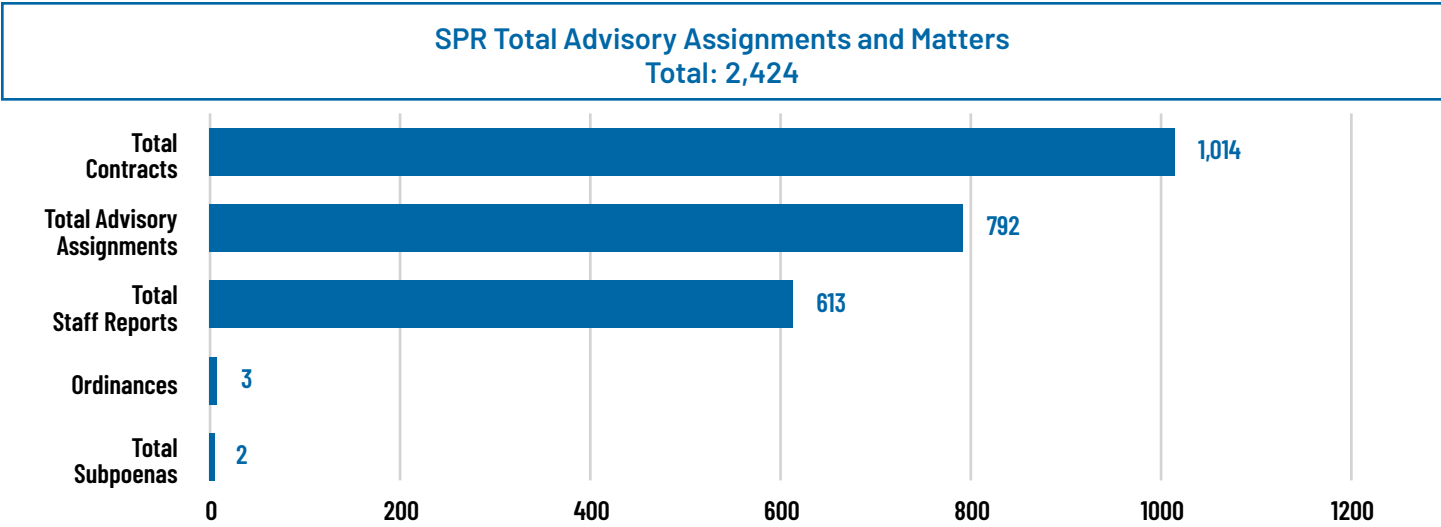
Assisted the Fire Department in establishing an Emergency Medical Services Corps program at McClellan Park. The program provides at-risk youth with training to become emergency medical technicians.

Reparations Engagement Plan for Action, Investment, and Redress (REPAIR) Initiative

Assisted in execution of a \$119,999 agreement with the Greater Sacramento Urban League to lead a community-centered engagement process that develops an action plan for the creation of a municipal reparations commission, task force, or committee that will build on the relationships, research, and momentum of the reparative work the Council began in 2021.

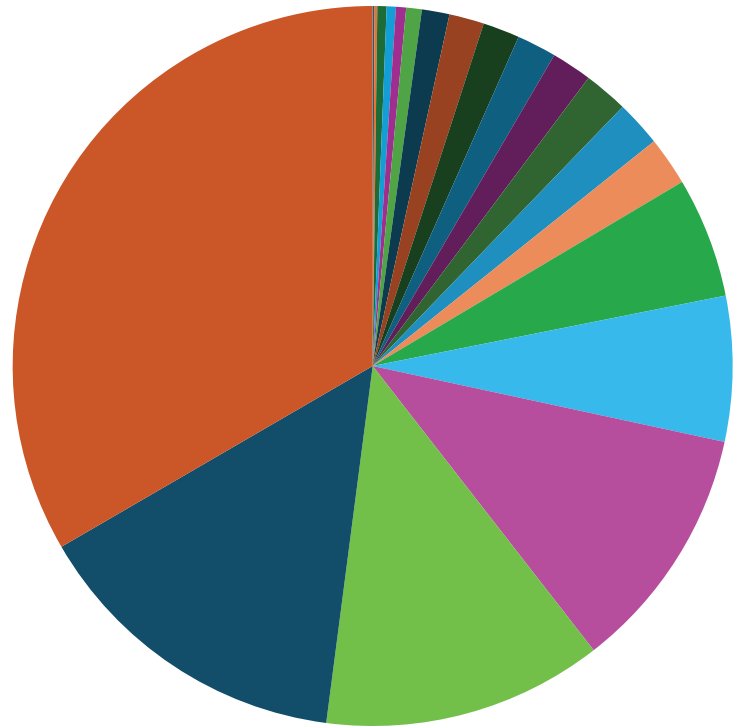
Delta Shores Community Facilities District Special Tax Bonds

Advised the City Treasurer on the \$14 million bond issuance to finance the costs of acquisition and construction of public facilities in Council District 8, including improvements to water and storm drains, traffic, landscaping, and parks.



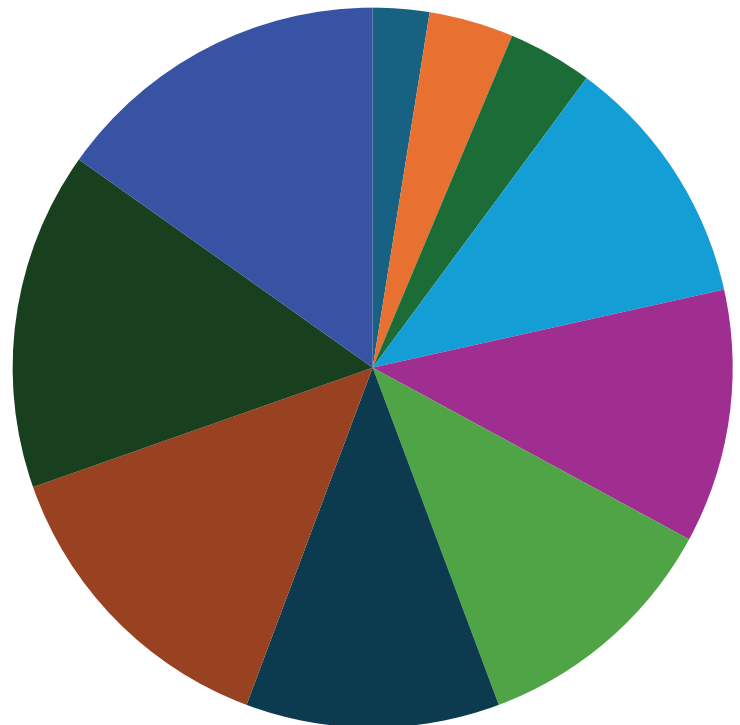
SPR Advisory & Matters by Department
Total: 2,424 Advisory & Matters

809	33%	City Manager
353	15%	Convention and Cultural Services
305	13%	Finance
269	11%	Fire
158	7%	City Clerk
131	5%	Committee and Commission Assignments
53	2%	Public Works
50	2%	City Treasurer
48	2%	Police
44	2%	IT
43	2%	Parks and Recreation
40	2%	Community Response
38	2%	Community Development
30	1%	Human Resources
17	1%	Ethics
11	<1%	City Attorney
10	<1%	Mayor and City Council
10	<1%	Economic Development
3	<1%	Ann Land/Bertha Henschel Memorial Fund
2	<1%	Utilities



SPR Staffed Board & Commission Meetings
Total: 80 Meetings

12	15%	Community Police Review Commission
12	15%	Ethics Commission
11	14%	Law and Legislation Committee
9	12%	Arts, Culture, Creative Economy Commission
9	11%	Civil Service Board
9	11%	HCAAB
9	11%	Measure U Commission
3	4%	AIFM
3	4%	Defined Contributions Plans Committee
2	3%	Ethel MacLeod Committee



GENERAL COUNSEL AND ADVISORY

The General Counsel and Advisory Division provides legal advice and support to the City Council, all City departments, and staff. The group advises on all aspects of municipal law, including the Brown Act; Public Records Act; Political Reform Act; the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); water law; Propositions 26 and 218; public bidding, construction, and procurement; contract negotiation, drafting, and review; prevailing wages; transportation; real estate procurement, conveyance, and leasing; solid waste disposal; landfill regulation; and various other areas of municipal law.

NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

Worked with Procurement staff to update and consolidate the City’s contracting rules to ease implementation while also maintaining transparency and fairness in the City’s contracting process. This project involved updates to the city code, procurement policies, and the city’s contract templates for the purchase of goods, non-professional services, professional services, and public projects

Assisted staff and the Sacramento Children’s Fund Planning and Oversight Commission with the development and approval of the City’s first Strategic Investment Plan, consistent with Measure L.

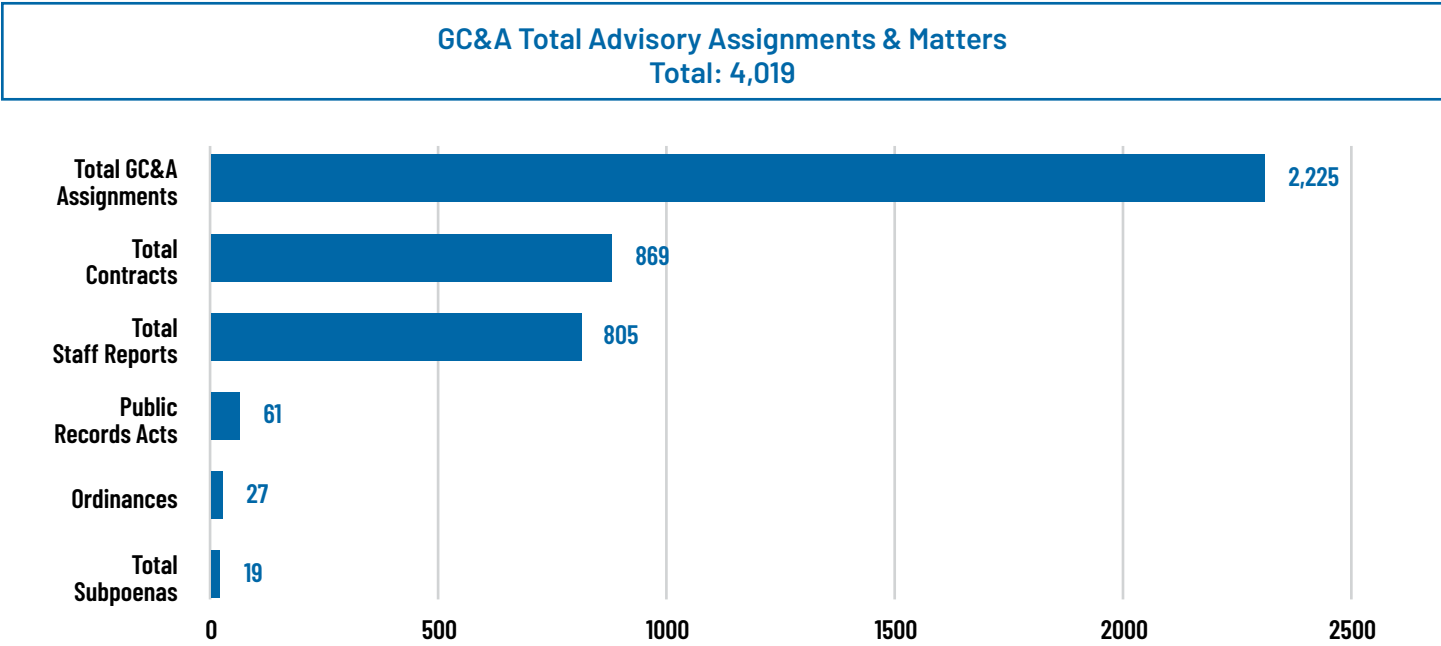
Advised DOU staff on updated development fees for water, separated sewer, combined sewer, and a new storm drainage fee. Drafted an authorizing ordinance for the storm drainage fee. Reviewed nexus studies and compliance with authorizing statutes and advised staff on the fee adoption

process and requested exemptions. Despite significant developer opposition, litigation threats, and headwinds presented by state housing laws, DOU successfully obtained the requested fee levels.

Successfully defended several lawsuits, including a challenge to an 800-residential-unit project on Bercut Drive and a preliminary lawsuit challenging the Airport South Industrial project.

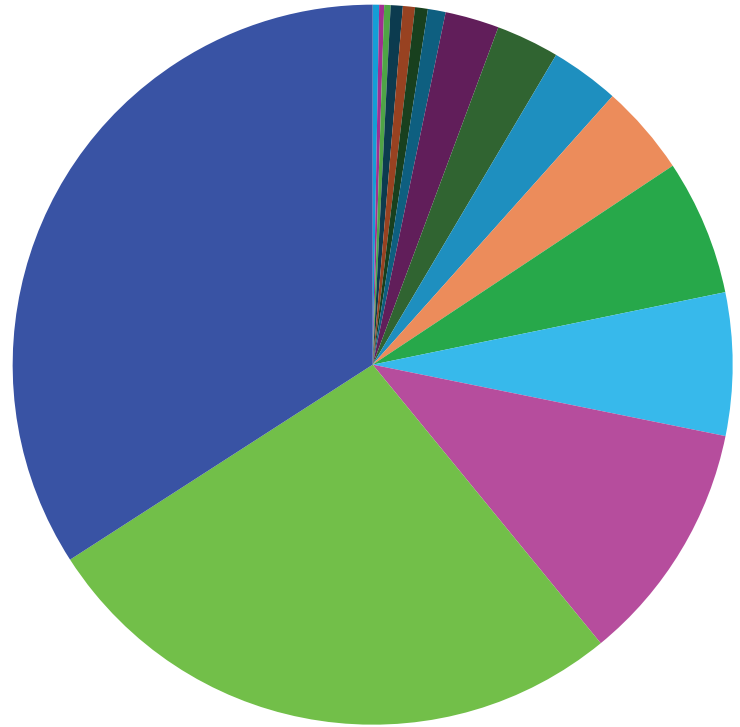
Assisted in the drafting of the City’s Missing Middle Housing Interim Ordinance. By adopting this ordinance, the City became the first jurisdiction in the state to allow multi-unit housing in every neighborhood.

Advised the Department of Public Works on the creation of a new Transportation Safety Team that increases the City’s ability to install improvements to the transportation network more rapidly.



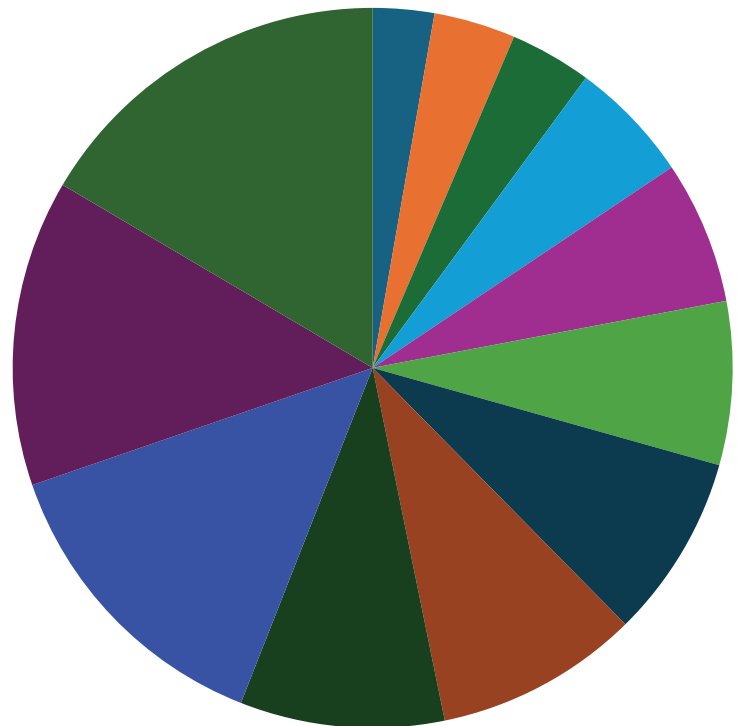
GC&A Advisory & Matters by Department
Total: 3,137 Advisory & Matters

1,070	34%	Public Works
841	27%	Utilities
342	11%	Parks and Recreation
201	6%	Community Development
191	6%	City Manager
128	4%	Human Resources
97	3%	Library Authority
89	3%	Convention and Cultural Services
76	2%	City Clerk
25	1%	Finance
18	1%	All Council
17	1%	City Attorney
17	1%	City Auditor
9	<1%	Other
9	<1%	Police
7	<1%	Mayor



GC&A Staffed Board & Commission Meetings
Total: 109 Meetings

18	17%	Planning and Design Commission
15	14%	Library Authority
15	14%	Code Enforcement Hearings
10	9%	Disabilities Advisory Commission
10	9%	Active Transportation Commission
9	8%	Parks and Community Enrichment Commission
8	7%	Sacramento Children's Fund Commission
7	6%	Youth Commission
6	5%	Preservation Commission
4	4%	Litigation Resolution/Workers' Compensation Claims Committees
4	4%	Ann Land and Bertha Henschel Memorial Funds Commission
3	4%	Utilities Rate Advisory Commission



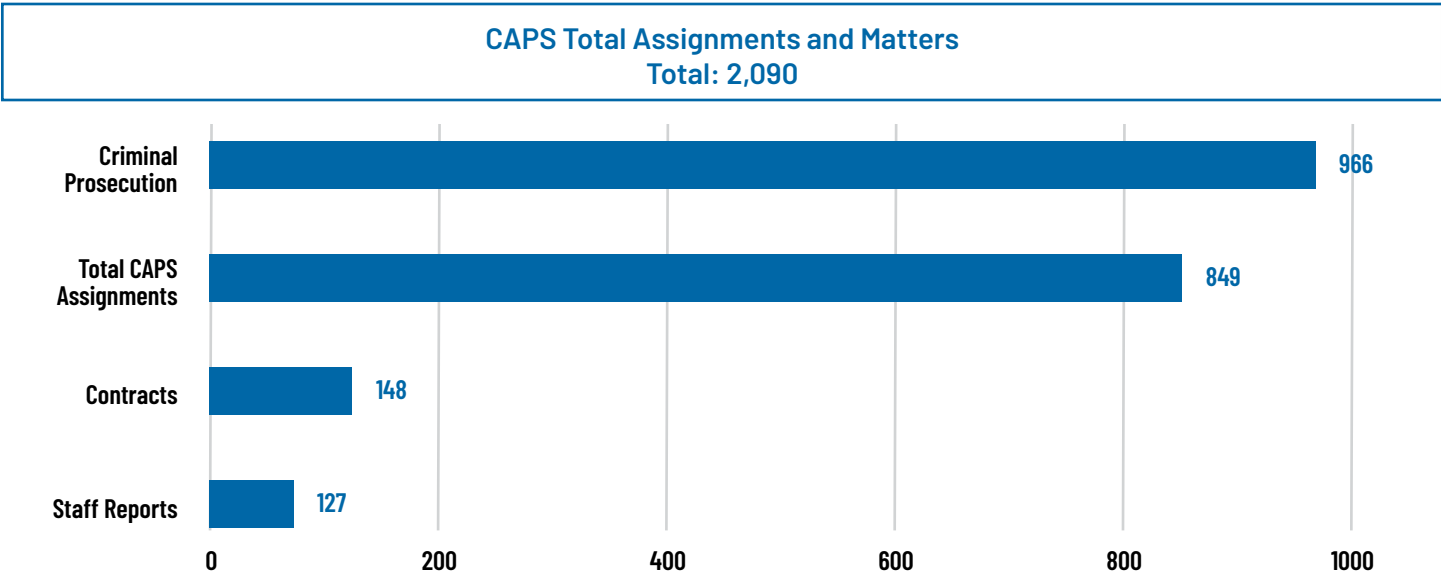
COMMUNITY ADVOCACY & PUBLIC SAFETY DIVISION (“CAPS”)

This division provides advisory and enforcement support to the Sacramento Police Department (SPD) and the Neighborhood Code Compliance, Business Compliance, and Housing and Dangerous Buildings divisions of the Community Development Department (CDD). The division partners with enforcement departments to prosecute and abate physical and social nuisances. The division also includes a Criminal Prosecution Unit that prosecutes criminal violations of the City Code.

In its capacity as the general counsel for SPD and the three divisions of CDD, CAPS advises on and helps draft ordinances, provides legal advice regarding the California Public Records Act, responds to subpoenas, and provides analysis and advice on the various provisions of state and federal law that pertain to the departments. In addition, attorneys in the division represent the city on all Pitchess motions and advise and make appearances regarding Gun Violence Restraining Orders, and handle all weapons destruction petitions.

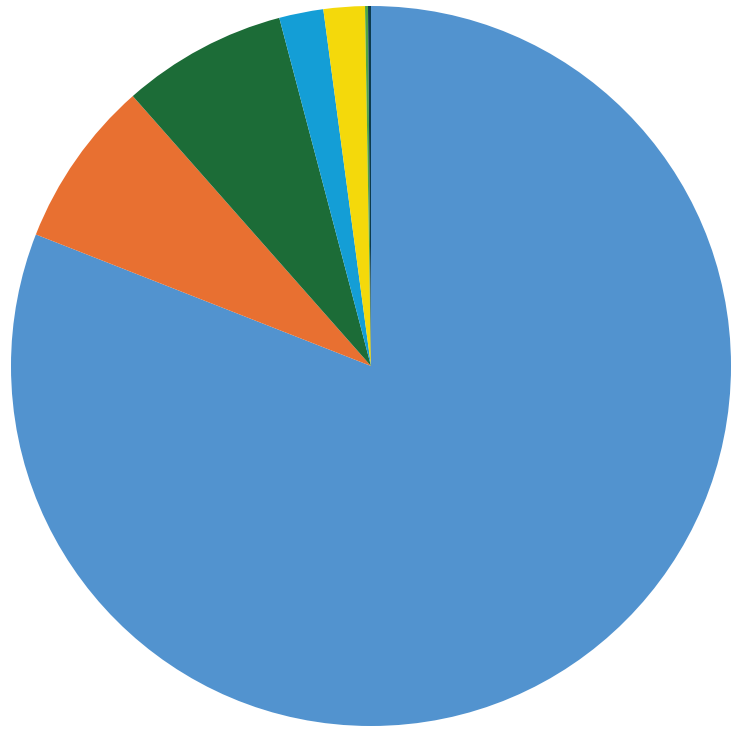
In its enforcement role, the mission of the division is to fight corrosive social and criminal nuisances that degrade the quality of life in the City. The division’s aim is to identify, prioritize, and address criminal problems before they grow into serious offenses that can lead to urban decay. The division understands that the ability to respond to neighborhood complaints and address criminal problems proactively is critical to improving quality of life in our neighborhoods.

Through the Justice for Neighbors (JFN) program, our office has coordinated with the City’s enforcement departments, including the Fire and Community Development Departments, to target abandoned structures, nuisance properties, and blight plaguing neighborhoods. The JFN team files lawsuits seeking aggressive and specifically tailored injunctive relief, including stay-away orders, closure of properties, hiring of security guards, installation of video camera systems, and other improvements to properties. In cases where such remedies are inadequate to abate the nuisance, CAPS attorneys have the ability to petition the court to request that a receiver be appointed to oversee the abatement of nuisances on the property.



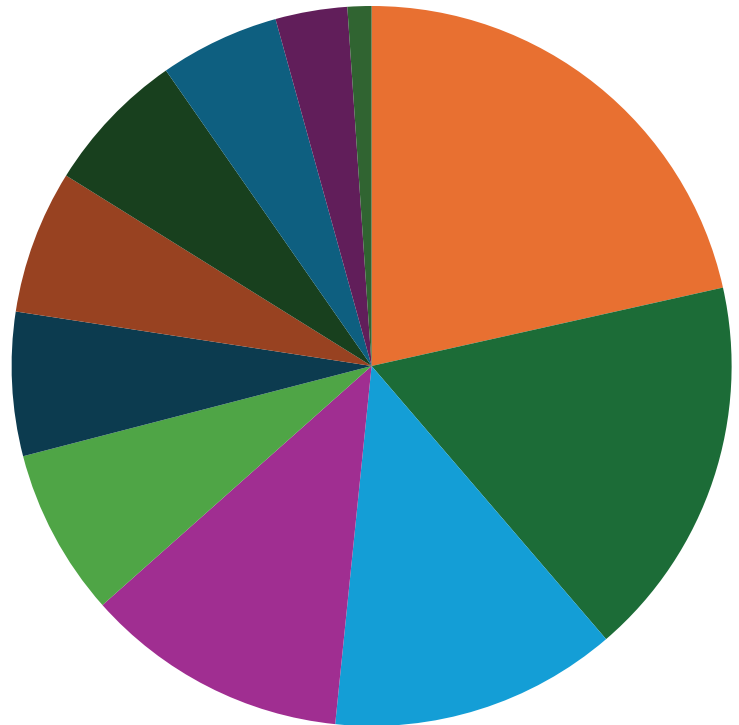
SPD Legal Assignments & Matters
Total: 756 Assignments & Matters

612	81%	SPD Assignments
57	8%	Weapons
56	7%	GVR0
15	2%	Pitchess
14	2%	SPD Subpoenas
1	<1%	SPD Writs
1	<1%	SPD Ordinance

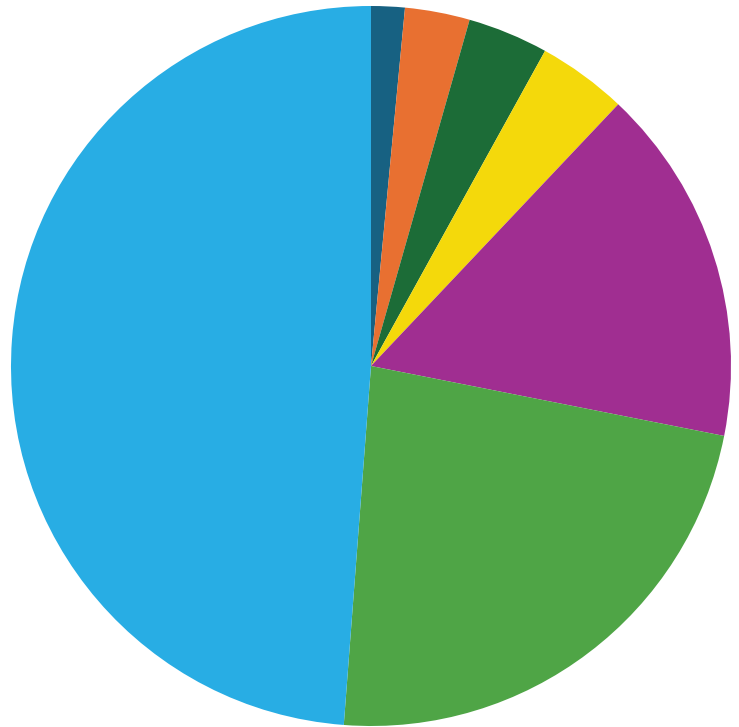
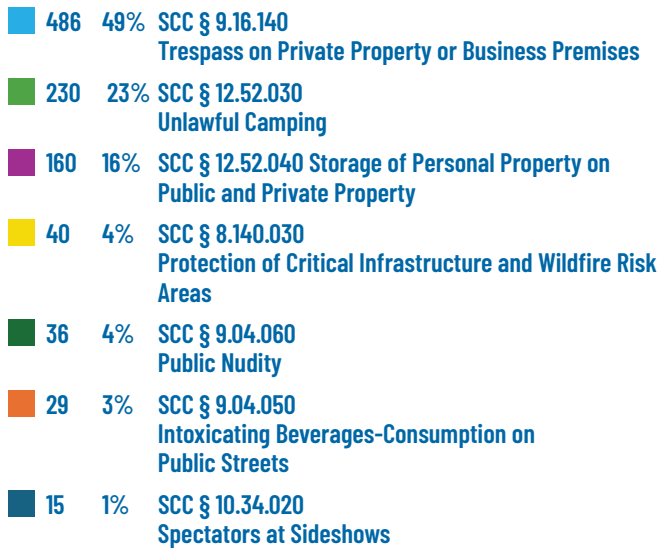


Other CAPS Assignments & Matters
Total: 93 Assignments & Matters

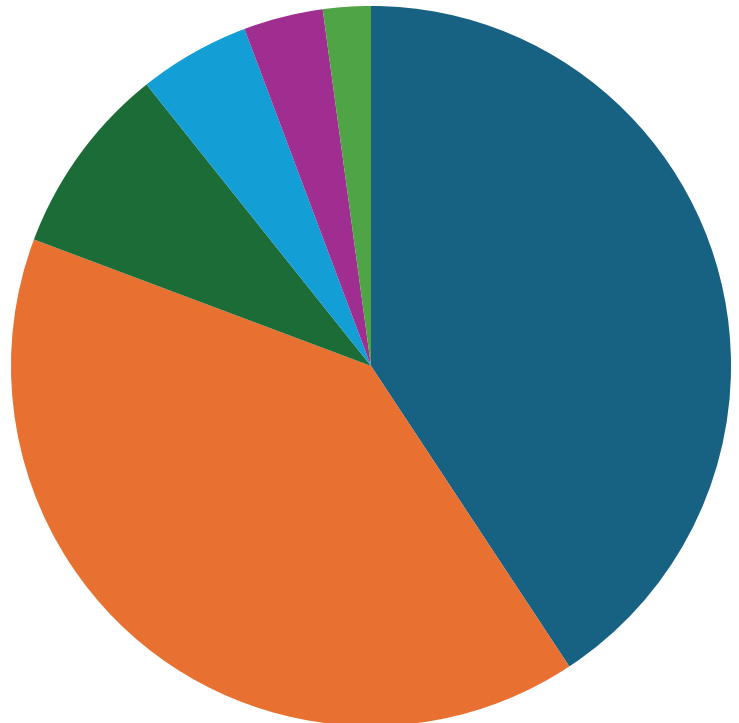
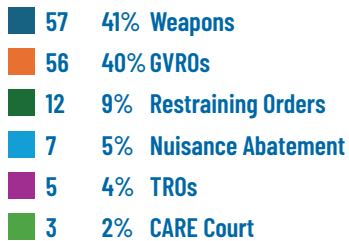
20	22%	Advice
16	17%	Administrative Appeals
12	13%	Restraining Orders
11	12%	PRA's
7	8%	Nuisance Abatement
6	7%	Cannabis
6	6%	Subpoenas
6	6%	Receiverships
5	5%	TROs
3	3%	CARE Court
1	1%	Writs



Criminal Prosecution by Category Total: 996 Prosecutions



Direct Community Benefit Projects Total: 140 Projects



NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

GVROs

The CAPS Division has initiated a full-time program assisting the Sacramento Police Department in obtaining Gun Violence Restraining Orders. Every Friday, the division sends an attorney to court to staff the GVRO table, helping officers present their cases. Since we started running this calendar, 88 firearms have been taken out of the hands of violent offenders, including domestic abusers and others engaging in conduct which disqualifies them from gun ownership, and placed under the protection of SPD for a period of time ordered by the Sacramento Superior Court.



Enforcement post-Grants Pass

CAPS supported the Incident Management Team to update its enforcement structure and efforts after the US Supreme Court's decision of Grants Pass by providing legal analysis and various legal opinions involving the impact of that court decision on all city department operations including CMO, SPD, SFD, Code Enforcement, DCR, and DOU, among others. CAPS also supported the City Manager and various departments with Legal analysis and drafting documents to implement new Council direction related to homelessness enforcement through the adoption of a new resolution and amendments to the Citywide homelessness response protocols.

Justice for Neighbors

Since 2011, a single-family residence on Camarillo Drive in the Natomas area created social and physical nuisances that caused serious disturbances to neighbors. After an April 2024 Justice for Neighbors (JFN) meeting with over a dozen neighbors and then-Mayor Pro Tem Talamantes, the

City Attorney's Office acted quickly to file a public nuisance action and petition for a health and safety receivership against the property owner.

Prior to CAO intervention, this property was the site of drug, theft, and child abuse crimes, as well as numerous complaints from neighbors regarding noise, suspicious activities and individuals, drug and property crimes, and concern for personal and familial safety.

The strength of the CAO's filings caused sufficient pressure upon the property owner that he decided to sell the residence by the end of 2024 instead of going through litigation and face receivership. As a result, the neighborhood now enjoys the peace and safety it had lost, and a reputable real estate investment firm purchased the property and returned it to the beautiful home it was once known to be.



CARE Court

CAPS advised the City's public safety departments regarding the State of California's new CARE Court program to expand access to mental health court, including submitting petitions to the Sacramento Superior Court for individuals in our community suffering from severe and untreated mental illness and other co-occurring disorders. Also, co-authored a published paper regarding CARE Court.

Camp Resolution

CAPS supported the CMO and various departments including SPD, SFD, Code Enforcement, DCR, and DOU, during the closure and enforcement efforts involving Camp Resolution, by providing legal analysis regarding constitutional issues and legal exposure involving enforcement and closure.



Military Equipment Use Policy

CAPS assisted SPD and City Council to adopt its ordinance approving MEU, and to update the MEU annual's report as required under AB 481.

Advising and Representing SPD's Internal Affairs Division

CAPS provided legal representation to SPD's Internal affairs unit involving officers' personnel files, advising the department in its role as a custodian of records, and provided successful representation both at the Superior Court and Court of Appeals. Additionally, CAO provided a training session for all IA staff and prepared a legal manual for the division as a continuing legal resource.

Race Blind Charging

CAPS has taken the lead in developing new policies and procedures in following new state laws regarding race-blind charging in its criminal prosecution practice. These new laws require substantially more staff and attorney time at intake to ensure that our charging decisions are being made in accordance with these state laws.

Tenant Protection Support to Residents of The Grove Apartments

CAPS was able to help support the Tenant Protection Program as it addressed the concerned residents of The Grove at Johnston Park apartment building.

Automatic License Plate Reader Guidance

CAPS assisted SPD in allegations from the media that it was unlawfully sharing ALPR data with out-of-state agencies. Given the ambiguous language of SB 34, CAPS attorneys had to conduct a thorough review of the legislative history of the bill and review similar bills that were passed or rejected by the Legislature to provide guidance to the client. This guidance allowed SPD to update its policies prior to the June release of a Sacramento Grand Jury investigation that came to the same conclusion.

Sideshow Ordinance

CAPS supported the council's adoption of an emergency ordinance on sideshows to provide additional enforcement authority to combat illegal sideshow activity in Sacramento.



Sacramento Regional Human Trafficking Task Force (SR HTTF)

CAPS worked closely with the Sacramento County District Attorney's Office, California Department of Justice, and the United States Department of Homeland Security in implementing a regional task force targeting the disruption of human trafficking operations and protect children from criminal exploitation. The SR HTTF is now the third such regional task force in California, with the other two task forces situated in the greater areas of San Diego and Fresno.

Sacramento Police Department General Orders and Policies

The CAPS Division worked tirelessly in assisting the Sacramento Police Department with updating and improving critical general orders and policies. In addition, the CAPS Division has ensured that such review and analysis has been conducted in a time-efficient manner.

International Municipal Lawyers Association (IMLA) Presentation Code Enforcement - Administrative Hearings at the Local Level

CAPS was asked by IMLA to provide a legal presentation to lawyers across the globe to present on the topic of how to implement and conduct local administrative hearings given the CAO's extensive expertise in the subject matter.

Legal Training

As part of its efforts to effectively advise and ensure proper enforcement of the Sacramento City Code, the CAPS Division provides routine 4th Amendment training to those city departments responsible for enforcing the city code, including Code Enforcement and Housing and Dangerous Buildings. In 2024, the CAO provided to code enforcement officers and housing and dangerous buildings inspectors a robust training that reviewed general constitutional principles, common scenarios, and best practices to ensure the rights of Sacramento's residents are maintained.

OFFICE PROGRAMS

Career Fairs



The City Attorney's Office attended five separate career fairs throughout the community this year, including the "You Betta' Work" Sacramento LGBTQ+ Career

Fair on September 12, 2024, the Health Education Council Career Fair on September 13, 2024, the McGeorge Externship Fair on September 17, 2024, the 3rd Annual Sacramento Region Diversity Career Fair on September 21, 2024, and the UC Davis School of Law's Virtual Public Interest & Government Career Fair on November 6, 2024.

At each of these career fairs, attorneys and staff spoke directly with attendees about the office, law clerk program, the hiring process, and the office's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Law Clerk Program

Our award-winning law clerk program continues to thrive thanks to all the attorneys who work with and provide guidance to the students. Our office has been acknowledged by McGeorge School of Law's Public Legal Services Society as an exceptional supporter of their mission of enhancing the ability of law students to choose public interest or public-service careers.

Most of the program applicants are students from local law schools – McGeorge School of Law and UC Davis – but we have also had applicants from various other law schools across the U.S. Our office hosts students year-round, with students clerking part-time during the school semesters and full-time during the summer.

In addition to working on various legal issues, the law clerks also accompany attorneys to meetings, arbitrations, mediations, depositions, hearings, and trials, all of which help them utilize their newly acquired skills in a professional setting. In recent years, some of our law clerks have also been able to make supervised appearances on behalf of the City through the State Bar's Practical Training of Law Students certification program.

Notably, in 2024, the inaugural class of paid summer

law clerks interned in our office with great success, thus expanding the opportunity to engage in public service to students who may not otherwise be able to afford to do so. Many of our former law clerks have later been hired into full-time attorney positions within the office.

Law Day

On May 1st, the City Attorney's office celebrated Law Day. The theme of this year's program was "The Constitution's Promise: Out of many – One," and was commemorated with a panel discussion with law professors, Legislative Counsel and general counsel, Women Lawyers of Sacramento and a Superior Court Judge.

This year we held a youth contest for grades 7 and 8. Contestants were to submit an essay or an illustration explaining what the Constitution means to them. Three winners were elected and invited to a council meeting to collect their prize.

Our office also hosted its annual open house on the same day, providing tours, games and snacks to City employees.

City of
SACRAMENTO
Office of the City Attorney

Law Day
May 1, 2025
Historic City Hall Council Chambers
915 I Street, 2nd Floor

Doors Open at 11:30 a.m.
Presentations* beginning at 12:00 p.m. including:

<p>Natalie Fujikawa, President of Women Lawyers of Sacramento</p>	<p>Judge Richard C. Miedlich, Sacramento County Superior Court</p>	<p>Professor Vikram D. Amar, Distinguished Professor of Law, University of California, Davis, School of Law</p>
<p>Phanysha Gaddis, General Counsel of the San Juan Unified School District, Wilay Manuel Bar Association</p>	<p>Joe Ayala, Former Legislative Counsel for the California Legislature, Cruz Reynoso Bar Association</p>	<p>Professor Larry Levine, Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion & Professor of Law at the University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law</p>

*The activity is pending approval from the State Bar of California for 1.0 hour MCLE general credit.

Fostering Growth, Building Legacy: The CAO Mentorship Program

In the Sacramento City Attorney's Office, we recognize that our most valuable asset is our people. As part of our ongoing commitment to professional development and excellence in public service, the CAO Mentorship Program has emerged as a vital initiative to cultivate talent, strengthen institutional knowledge, and reinforce a culture of mutual respect and growth.

Mentoring is more than guidance—it's a **partnership grounded in a shared commitment to learn, grow, and thrive together**. The CAO Mentorship Program is designed with intention and care, offering structured opportunities for both mentors and mentees to focus on common goals, establish clear expectations, and build relationships rooted in trust and mutual respect.

At its core, the Program is about connection and knowledge transfer. Through this process, seasoned attorneys and staff share insights, skills, and professional wisdom with their mentees, helping to prepare the next generation of legal professionals and public servants. The one-on-one mentorship model creates a space where mentees can gain practical advice, explore new areas of interest, and navigate the unique landscape of municipal law with support and confidence.

Beyond professional development, the CAO Mentorship Program plays a key role in recruitment and retention. Newer employees often cite the opportunity for mentorship as a distinguishing feature of our office culture—one that signals investment in their long-term success. Mentorship also supports internal mobility by helping mentees identify and prepare for promotion opportunities, ensuring our office continues to grow strong leaders from within.

For mentors, the Program offers a rewarding avenue to give back, reinforce their own learning, and help shape the future of the Office. For mentees, it opens doors to invaluable networks, guidance, and resources, including access to senior-level attorneys and leadership they may not otherwise engage with in their day-to-day work.

In addition to one-on-one mentoring, the Program encompasses group activities, collaborative discussions, and targeted learning sessions that further enhance team building and cross-functional collaboration. These activities ensure the mentorship experience is not just beneficial at an individual level, but also contributes meaningfully to the cohesion and overall effectiveness of the CAO.

By investing in mentorship, the Sacramento City Attorney's Office is investing in its future—building a legacy of leadership, collaboration, and continuous learning that will serve our community for years to come.

Gold DEI Leadership Seal Recipient

In 2023, The State Bar of California started its DEI Leadership Seal Program which recognizes legal employers that commit to and implement research-driven actions that further workplace diversity, equity, and inclusion. The program is open to all legal employers with California-licensed attorneys, including private law firms, legal academia, non-profit organizations, and government agencies.

The Sacramento City Attorney's Office enrolled in the program's first cohort. The office completed 9 out of the 10 action items, including creating a strategic DEI plan, collecting employment data, participating in annual implicit bias training, and integrating DEI into performance evaluations and job duties. In 2024, the Sacramento City Attorney's Office became one of only two municipal law offices awarded the Gold Seal for its accomplishments—the highest award possible.



City of
SACRAMENTO

Office of the City Attorney

Susana Alcala Wood
City Attorney
Sacramento City Hall
915 I Street, Room 4006
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 808-5346
www.cityofsacramento.org/attorney