LEGAL

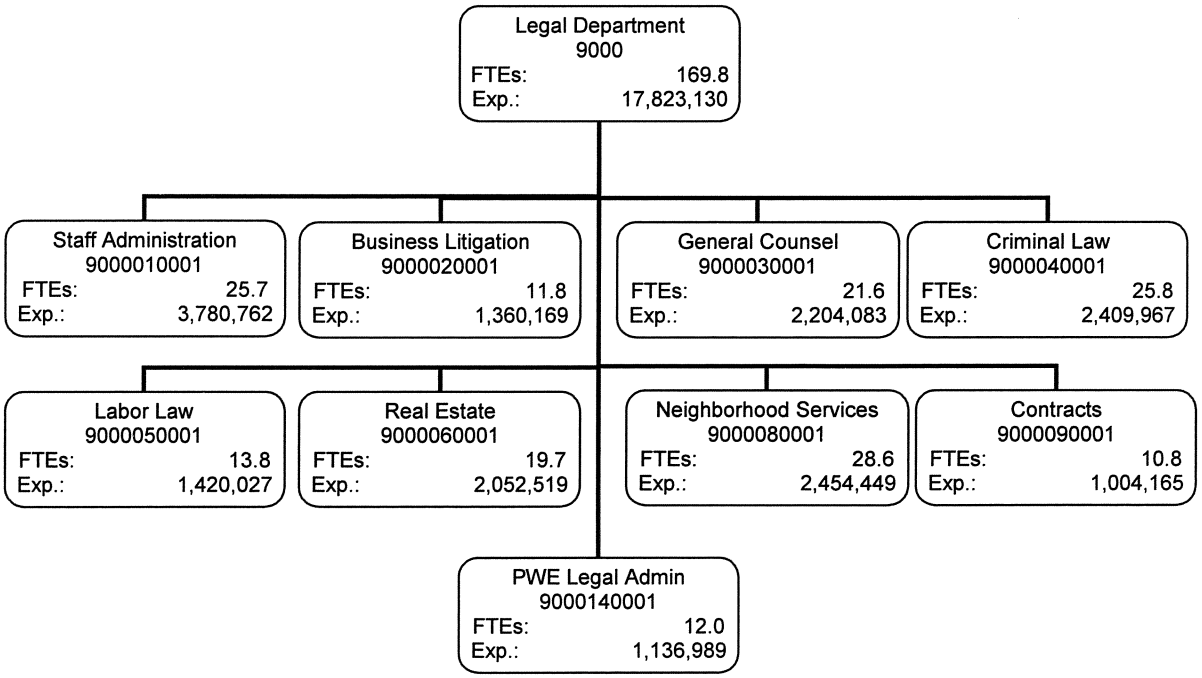
Department Description and Mission

The mission of the Legal Department is to provide the City of Houston with the highest quality municipal legal services, facilitate the operations of the City and protect its interests. The Department is organized into eleven (General Fund) divisions to accomplish this mission: Staff Administration, Business Litigation, General Counsel, Criminal Law, Labor Law, Real Estate, Land Use, Neighborhood Service, Contracts, Public Works & Engineering Legal Administration, and Governmental Regulations.

The Legal Department's work is funded primarily from the General Fund and the Property and Casualty Fund. Additionally, some legal services related to workers compensation benefits are funded out of the Workers Compensation Administration Fund.

The central duties of the Legal Department funded from the General Fund include the preparation of City ordinances and resolutions, research and drafting of legal opinions, preparation of contracts, bond issue representation, deed restriction enforcement, support for the dangerous building demolition project, utility regulation, collection of revenue on past due accounts, claims resolution, personnel actions, prosecution of violators of City ordinances, and representing the City in commercial and employment litigation.

Department Organization



Business Area Budget Summary

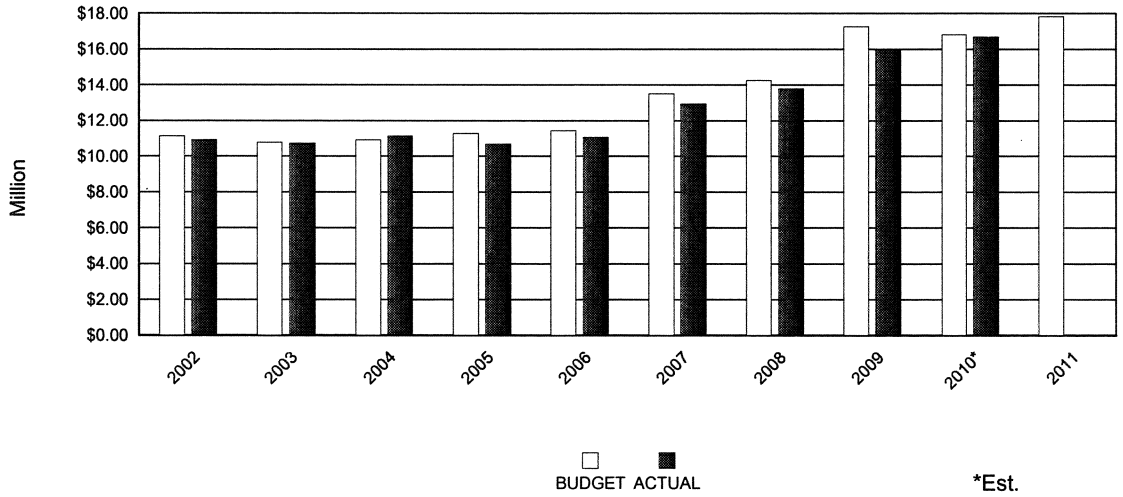
Fund Name : General Fund
Business Area Name : Legal
Fund No./Bus. Area No. : 1000 / 9000

		FY2009 Actual	FY2010 Current Budget	FY2010 Estimate	FY2011 Budget
Expenditures	Personnel Services	14,453,618	15,280,492	15,193,161	**16,328,890**
	Supplies	393,155	432,841	416,372	**362,900**
	Other Services and Charges	1,138,548	1,100,052	1,068,411	**1,128,573**
	Total M & O Expenditures	15,985,321	16,813,385	16,677,944	**17,820,363**
	Debt Service & Other Uses	10,745	8,584	8,584	**2,767**
	Total Expenditures	15,996,066	16,821,969	16,686,528	**17,823,130**
Revenues		1,489,380	1,417,831	1,299,342	**1,247,598**
Staffing	Full-Time Equivalents - Civilian	168.1	170.8	161.9	**169.8**
	Full-Time Equivalents - Classified	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
	Full-Time Equivalents - Cadets	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
	Total	168.1	170.8	161.9	**169.8**
	Full-Time Equivalents - Overtime	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**

Significant Budget Changes and Highlights

- The FY2011 Budget provides funding for the HOPE 3% increase ($360,181) and 1.25% Pay for Performance increase ($148,492).

Legal
Current Budget vs Actual Expenditures



*Est.

Business Area Cost Center Summary

Fund Name : General Fund
Business Area Name : Legal
Fund No./Bus Area No. : 1000 / 9000

Cost Center Description	Cost Center Objectives
LGL - Staff Administration 9000010001	
Responsible for records management, accounts payable, personnel functions, facility maintenance, law library, budget, financial and management analysis, and maintenance of the Legal Department's fixed asset management system.	Maintain efficiency of the department's local area network (LAN). Develop workflow aging report from file management database system. Review law library collection.
LGL - Business Litigation 9000020001	
Commercial and construction litigation; hotel occupancy tax, franchise fee and other collections; and contract disputes and litigation.	Defend and prosecute claims and litigation in assigned areas of responsibility. Assist in recovering revenues for other departments. Report on affirmative and defensive claims and litigation matters handled by the division.
LGL - General Counsel 9000030001	
Prepare Code amendments, ordinances and opinions; handle Texas Public Information Act and subpoena request, provide legal counsel regarding open meetings, taxation, annexation, elections, municipal finance, franchises, sign code and utility regulatory matters.	Provide prompt response on ordinances and opinions requested, attend regulatory board and committee meetings, handle public information and subpoena requests, manage annexations including strategic partnership agreements and continue mentoring various programs.
LGL - Criminal Law 9000040001	
Represent the State in most cases filed in the municipal courts.	Maintain consistency among prosecutors regarding the use of professional judgment and implement a new process for serving and prosecuting business entities.
LGL - Labor Law 9000050001	
Represent City in personnel hearings, arbitrations, litigation appeals from adverse rulings and judgements. Act on EEOC and Texas Commission on Human Rights matters. Review pension issues and FMLA/ADA accommodations. Provide legal opinions on personnel matters.	Represent City on appeals from indefinite suspensions, arbitrations, litigation, unemployment claims, EEOC and other personnel actions; advise departments proactively on employee issues to reduce claims; and provide monthly reports.
LGL - Real Estate 9000060001	
Provide legal svcs/draft ordinances relating to land sales, acquisitions, eminent domain procedures and other interests in property, title exam reports, Community Development Block Grants/other grants, land use issues, environmental matters and economic development.	Improve production statistics and reporting format by attorney through closer coordination with PWE and access to their computerized tracking systems. Manage Continuing Legal Education (CLE) program, reduce file turnaround time, and increase use of on-line resources.

Business Area Cost Center Summary

Fund Name : General Fund
Business Area Name : Legal
Fund No./Bus Area No. : 1000 / 9000

Performance Measures	FY2009 Actual			FY2010 Estimate			FY2011 Budget		
	Activities	FTEs	Costs $	Activities	FTEs	Costs $	Activities	FTEs	Costs $
Workflow aging reports		4			4			**4**	
Internal satisfaction survey		1			1			**1**	
Client-dept satisfaction survey		1			0			**1**	
		28.6	3,432,402		26.2	3,606,289		**25.7**	**3,780,762**
New litigation filed		46			50			**55**	
Matters in litigation		85			90			**95**	
Lost revenue recovered ($)	8,687,512			9,000,000			**10,000,000**		
		12.7	1,245,391		13.0	1,316,833		**11.8**	**1,360,169**
Ordinances/code amendment		60			70			**80**	
Tracking reports		12			12			**12**	
Opinions		100			125			**140**	
Utility regulatory matters		37			69			**70**	
TPIAs and subpoenas		N/A			N/A			**3,100**	
		6.2	572,463		4.6	598,884		**21.6**	**2,204,083**
Cases filed per year	1,212,933			1,065,012			**1,140,744**		
Summary reports		12			12			**12**	
In-house meetings focused on caseload mgt impvmt		6			6			**6**	
		25.0	2,154,513		25.5	2,156,048		**25.8**	**2,409,967**
EEOC charges filed/TWC		384			402			**400**	
Personnel actions/hearings		678			1,000			**800**	
Trials/appeals		24			18			**30**	
Opinions/special issues		29			18			**10**	
Arbitrations		24			31			**25**	
		14.1	1,290,407		12.8	1,406,464		**13.8**	**1,420,027**
Title examinations		36			40			**44**	
General property matters		720			792			**871**	
HCD matters resolved		187			206			**227**	
Land use/environment issue		N/A			N/A			**285**	
Economic development		0			108			**108**	
		14.1	1,343,061		12.2	1,215,575		**19.7**	**2,052,519**

Business Area Cost Center Summary

Fund Name : General Fund
Business Area Name : Legal
Fund No./Bus Area No. : 1000 / 9000

Cost Center Description	Cost Center Objectives
LGL - Land Use 9000070001	
Land use planning, pollution law enforcement, utility franchise issues and rate hearings before the Public Utility Commission and Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, and tax abatement and special districts.	Maintain and improve assignment tracking, improve turnaround time, and manage Continuing Education Program. This function was moved to Cost Center 9000060001 in FY2011.
LGL - Neighborhood Services 9000080001	
Handles admin. proceedings and civil litigation related to dangerous buildings, deed restrictions, alcohol beverage permits, sexually oriented businesses, and places of habitual crime. Provide real estate title info. to various COH depts. Attend public meetings.	Continue to improve deed restriction enforcement process, dangerous building hearing process, related title search activities; Sexually Oriented Business enforcement litigation; cross train; crime based nuisance abatement.
LGL - Contracts 9000090001	
Prepare, review, negotiate City contracts; draft approp.ords and opinions; research and issue bid irregularity opinions; handle McGregor Act claims and grants in excess of $400,000.	Work with client departments to develop online bidding; place construction contracts online; develop Legal's ClientProfiles system to better manage caseload.
LGL-PWE Legal Admin. 9000140001	
Personnel in this cost center are members of the Labor, Contracts, Real Estate and Land Use divisions; PWE covers their payroll because they work exclusively on PWE matters.	Included in their respective operating divisions.
LGL - Governmental Regulations 9000150001	
Handle ad valorem taxation, public information requests, financial disclosure statements, DOJ submissions, subpoenas, muni. finance, legislation, elections, redistricting, annexation, utility franchise/rate setting matters; counsel regulatory boards and commissions.	Track collection of delinquent taxes; establish mentoring programs on annexation, taxation, utility regulation and public finance. This function was moved to Cost Center 9000030001 in FY2011.

Business Area Cost Center Summary

Fund Name : General Fund
Business Area Name : Legal
Fund No./Bus Area No. : 1000 / 9000

Performance Measures	FY2009 Actual			FY2010 Estimate			FY2011 Budget		
	Activities	FTEs	Costs $	Activities	FTEs	Costs $	Activities	FTEs	Costs $
Land use issues	266			207			**N/A**		
Environmental issues	77			34			**N/A**		
Ordinances drafted	162			122			**N/A**		
		8.0	743,652		6.5	707,262		**0.0**	**0**
Admin. matters resolved	2,039			2,220			**2,630**		
Lawsuits resolved	27			41			**50**		
DR complaints resolved	1,074			1,293			**1,584**		
Public meetings attended	75			69			**90**		
Title reports provided	2,435			2,274			**2,354**		
		26.9	2,162,309		25.9	2,211,972		**28.6**	**2,454,449**
Contracts (Ks) prepared	1,380			1,200			**1,250**		
Ks reviewed by legal assts	250			220			**200**		
Grants, bond claims, opinions, ordinances	400			150			**175**		
		11.8	980,303		11.8	970,386		**10.8**	**1,004,165**
Attorneys Supported	6			6			**6**		
		10.1	1,104,455		10.0	1,097,440		**12.0**	**1,136,989**
Bd/Comm. mtgs attended	197			174			**N/A**		
AG-related TPIAs	1,048			1,094			**N/A**		
Non-AG related TPIAs	344			387			**N/A**		
Subpoenas	1,475			1,643			**N/A**		
Utility regulatory matters	37			69			**N/A**		
		10.6	967,110		13.4	1,399,375		**0.0**	**0**
Total		168.1	15,996,066		161.9	16,686,528		**169.8**	**17,823,130**

Business Area Roster Summary

Fund Name : General Fund
Business Area Name : Legal
Fund No./Bus Area No. : 1000 / 9000

Job Description	Pay Grade	FY2010 Current Budget FTE	FY2011 Budget FTE	Change
ADMINISTRATION MANAGER	26	1.0	1.0	
ADMINISTRATIVE AIDE	10	0.0	1.0	1.0
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT	17	5.0	5.0	
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT (EXE LEV)	17	4.0	3.0	(1.0)
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSOCIATE	13	1.0	1.0	
ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR (EXE LEV)	24	1.0	1.0	
ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALIST	20	2.0	2.0	
ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALIST (EXE LEV)	20	1.0	1.0	
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPERVISOR	22	3.0	3.0	
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPERVISOR (EXE LEV)	22	1.0	1.0	
ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY I	21	21.0	26.0	5.0
ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY II	24	16.0	15.0	(1.0)
ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY III	27	8.0	8.0	
CITY ATTORNEY	39	1.0	1.0	
CLERK	5	5.0	4.0	(1.0)
COMMUNITY LIAISON	18	1.0	1.0	
DEPUTY CITY ATTORNEY	38	1.0	1.0	
DIVISION MANAGER	29	1.0	1.0	
EXECUTIVE OFFICE ASSISTANT	15	3.0	2.0	(1.0)
FIRST ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY	37	1.0	1.0	
LAN SPECIALIST	26	1.0	1.0	
LEGAL ABSTRACTOR	10	1.0	1.0	
LEGAL INVESTIGATOR	18	3.0	2.0	(1.0)
MESSENGER	6	2.0	1.0	(1.0)
PARALEGAL I	12	9.0	8.0	(1.0)
PARALEGAL II	14	6.0	5.0	(1.0)
PARALEGAL III	16	9.0	9.0	
PAYROLL CLERK	9	1.0	0.0	(1.0)
RECEPTIONIST	7	1.0	1.0	
RECORDS TECHNICIAN	9	0.0	1.0	1.0
SENIOR ACCOUNT CLERK	13	2.0	2.0	
SENIOR ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY I	30	7.0	6.0	(1.0)
SENIOR ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY II	32	14.0	13.0	(1.0)
SENIOR ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY III	34	9.0	8.0	(1.0)
SENIOR ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY IV	35	3.0	3.0	
SENIOR ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY,DIVISION CHIEF	35	9.0	9.0	
SENIOR LEGAL ABSTRACTOR	13	2.0	2.0	
SENIOR LEGAL WORD PROCESSOR	13	4.0	4.0	
SENIOR OFFICE ASSISTANT	12	1.0	1.0	
SENIOR PARALEGAL	19	15.0	14.0	(1.0)
SENIOR STAFF ANALYST (EXE LEV)	28	1.0	1.0	
STUDENT INTERN II	10	1.0	0.0	(1.0)
SYSTEMS CONSULTANT	26	1.0	1.0	
Total FTEs		**179.0**	**172.0**	**(7.0)**
Less adjustment for Civilian Vacancy Factor		**8.2**	**2.2**	**(6.0)**
Full-Time Equivalents		**170.8**	**169.8**	**(1.0)**

Business Area Revenue Summary

Fund Name : General Fund
Business Area Name : Legal
Fund No./Bus Area No. : 1000 / 9000

Commit Item	Description	FY2010 Current Budget	FY2010 Estimate	FY2011 Budget
9000010001	**LGL - Staff Administration**			
424070	Interfund Legal Services	1,404,731	1,182,836	**1,234,498**
426330	Miscellaneous Copies Fees	3,000	4,606	**3,000**
434305	Judgments & Claims	5,000	104,600	**5,000**
452020	Recoveries & Refunds	5,000	5,000	**5,000**
452030	Miscellaneous Revenue	100	2,300	**100**
Total	**LGL - Staff Administration**	1,417,831	1,299,342	**1,247,598**
Total	**Legal**	1,417,831	1,299,342	**1,247,598**

Business Area Expenditure Summary

Fund Name : General Fund
Business Area Name : Legal
Fund No./Bus. Area No. : 1000 / 9000

Commit Item	Description	FY2009 Actual	FY2010 Current Budget	FY2010 Estimate	FY2011 Budget
500010	Salary Base Pay - Civilian	10,915,822	11,532,873	11,395,747	**12,133,149**
500060	Overtime - Civilian	974	0	0	**0**
500110	Bilingual Pay - Civilian	8,833	9,400	5,430	**5,438**
500180	Temporary Employees	9,894	9,709	1,323	**0**
501070	Pension - Civilian	1,625,997	1,672,737	1,661,292	**1,759,319**
501120	Termination Pay - Civilian	236,642	243,019	290,720	**319,587**
501160	Vehicle Allowance - Civilian	4,216	4,200	4,200	**4,200**
502010	FICA - Civilian	797,557	833,786	843,165	**881,256**
503010	Health Ins-Act Civilian	823,807	910,279	930,508	**1,011,683**
503015	Basic Life Insurance - Active Civilian	8,208	6,737	6,552	**7,230**
503060	Long Term Disability-Civilian	(1,400)	14,437	12,838	**14,434**
503090	Workers Compensation-Civilian-Admin	22,448	35,868	33,294	**35,658**
503100	Workers Compensation-Civilian-Claim	293	1,500	1,500	**1,500**
504020	Compensation Contingency	0	0	0	**148,492**
504030	Unemployment Claims	327	5,947	5,792	**6,944**
504031	Unemployment Claims	0	0	800	**0**
Total	**Personnel Services**	**14,453,618**	**15,280,492**	**15,193,161**	**16,328,890**
511045	Computer Supplies	59,145	52,000	57,000	**59,000**
511050	Paper & Printing Supplies	20,240	17,000	15,000	**16,000**
511055	Publications & Printed Materials	187,882	242,541	252,142	**190,000**
511060	Postage	30,779	43,000	24,730	**27,000**
511070	Miscellaneous Office Supplies	87,278	73,000	62,000	**65,000**
511110	Fuel	2,916	2,600	2,300	**2,600**
511150	Miscellaneous Parts & Supplies	4,915	2,700	3,200	**3,300**
Total	**Supplies**	**393,155**	**432,841**	**416,372**	**362,900**
520108	Information Resource Services	1,590	700	900	**700**
520109	Medical Dental & Laboratory Services	1,033	1,000	500	**800**
520110	Management Consulting Services	400,128	0	0	**0**
520112	Banking Services	270	250	300	**300**
520113	Photographic Services	127	0	0	**0**
520114	Miscellaneous Support Services	181,778	249,497	269,268	**279,934**
520119	Computer Equipment/Software Maintenance	19,145	42,000	22,000	**22,000**
520121	IT Application Svcs	4,203	5,395	5,395	**3,075**
520122	Office Equipment Services	500	500	0	**0**
520123	Vehicle & Motor Equipment Services	2,372	2,000	3,400	**2,700**
520510	Mail/Delivery Services	2,549	2,800	2,800	**2,700**
520515	Print Shop Services	8,083	5,200	5,100	**5,600**
520520	Printing & Reproduction Services	9,825	34,800	32,500	**35,000**
520605	Advertising Services	119	0	0	**0**
520705	Insurance Fees	1,646	3,017	1,244	**2,613**
520740	Document Recording/Filing Fees	5	1,000	0	**0**
520765	Membership & Professional Fees	30,303	32,750	33,100	**34,300**
520805	Education & Training	42,261	48,800	46,600	**45,100**
520905	Travel - Training Related	11,566	19,300	16,500	**12,300**
520910	Travel - Non-Training Related	10,190	6,900	7,200	**12,200**
521605	Data Services	28,018	21,814	21,814	**28,041**
521610	Voice Services	81,927	30,458	56,264	**80,853**
521620	Voice Equipment	9,099	1,911	1,911	**9,002**
521625	Voice Labor	651	0	394	**525**
521630	GIS Revolving Fund Services	0	0	0	**6,530**
521715	Office Equipment Rental	1,773	1,800	1,800	**1,800**
521725	Other Rental	1,198	1,800	1,300	**1,300**

Business Area Expenditure Summary

Fund Name : General Fund
Business Area Name : Legal
Fund No./Bus. Area No. : 1000 / 9000

Commit Item	Description	FY2009 Actual	FY2010 Current Budget	FY2010 Estimate	FY2011 Budget
521730	Parking Space Rental	106,770	123,000	123,000	**123,000**
521905	Legal Services	127,079	412,960	366,000	**368,000**
521910	Legal Svcs - Crt Rep	20	0	0	**0**
521915	Legal Svcs - Atty Fe	95	0	0	**0**
522420	Petty Cash/Change Special Fund	3,358	1,200	1,050	**1,200**
522430	Miscellaneous Other Services & Charges	3,973	4,100	3,550	**3,900**
522735	Interfund Communication Equipment Repair	0	100	100	**100**
522780	Interfund Photo Copy Services	46,894	45,000	44,421	**45,000**
Total	**Other Services and Charges**	**1,138,548**	**1,100,052**	**1,068,411**	**1,128,573**
532120	Transfer to Fleet/Eq	10,745	8,584	8,584	**2,767**
Total	**Debt Service and Other Uses**	**10,745**	**8,584**	**8,584**	**2,767**
	Grand Total Expenditures	**15,996,066**	**16,821,969**	**16,686,528**	**17,823,130**