

Legal Department

Patrick J. Hinkle, Corporation Counsel

John Roggeman, City Attorney

David V. Bent, Assistant City Attorney

The essential function of the Legal Department is to manage the legal affairs of the City of Mishawaka. That includes providing legal advice to the officers, departments, boards, commissions, and other agencies of the City.

The Legal Department represents the City in code enforcement hearings, provides legal support to the efforts of the Police and Fire Departments, reviews matters in all departments to ensure compliance with state and federal laws and regulations; it counsels department heads on employment issues; reviews contracts; drafts ordinances; and promptly commences all proceedings necessary to or advisable for the protection or enforcement of the rights of the City and the public.

The Legal Department's ongoing efforts to protect taxpayer dollars includes defending the City in lawsuits and other legal matters. The Legal Department also works to minimize the City's exposure from future lawsuits and manages ongoing litigation.

In the past year the Legal Department assisted the City administration in dealing with the COVID 19 pandemic, by providing advice on compliance with Federal, State and local laws pertaining to the pandemic as well as obtaining reimbursements for mitigation expenses incurred. In addition, the Legal Department provided advice to the City in connection with activities such as: negotiation of collective bargaining agreements; renewal of the solid waste disposal contract; the interlocal agreement for the extension of the Riverwalk over the Cedar Street bridge; and environmental issues related to the City's efforts to comply with Federal EPA requirements.