THE COMMUNITY

Denton is a unique community, blending its historic past with a dynamic and high growth environment, coupled with a diversity to give it economic viability and strength. Denton has grown from a small frontier town, founded in 1857, to a burgeoning urbanized area with an estimated population of 138,000. Denton is the county seat and a major city in Denton County. The historic downtown is the heart of Denton; the square and surrounding streets are vibrant and busy both day and night as a gathering place for commerce, civic events, and entertainment.

Located at the northern tip of a high growth area known as “The Golden Triangle” (formed by Denton, Fort Worth and Dallas), the city is a dynamic community whose rapid growth has affected its infrastructure as well as its culture. Denton is approximately 95 square miles in territory and strategically positioned approximately 37 miles northwest of Dallas and 35 miles northeast of Fort Worth. Located on the Interstate 35 corridor at the intersection of I-35E and I-35W, Denton is approximately 25 miles from DFW International Airport and 20 miles north of Alliance Airport.

Since the nineteenth century, Denton has been a major higher education center. The city is home to two state universities - the University of North Texas and Texas Woman’s University, with a combined enrollment in excess of 50,000 students. The city is also served by the North Central Texas College, the oldest two-year public college in Texas. Higher education is supported by the award-winning Denton Independent School District, serving more than 27,000 students in a 180 square mile district.

While the amenities of the major metropolitan settings in Dallas and Fort Worth are only minutes away, Denton has a variety of performing arts, cultural, and entertainment opportunities within the community. Golf courses and nearby lakes offer superior outdoor recreation. The City and its surrounding area offer theater, symphony orchestras, museums, intercollegiate athletics and other cultural and recreational amenities. Denton also has 30 parks and over 300 acres of open space, plus eight recreational facilities.

Denton offers its next Municipal Judge superb quality of life and an opportunity to make a difference in the community.

To learn more about the City of Denton, visit www.cityofdenton.com.
THE CITY OF DENTON GOVERNMENT

The City of Denton operates under the Council-Manager form of government. The Mayor and six-member Council are elected for two-year terms; four members are elected by District and the two remaining seats plus the Mayor are elected at-large. The City Manager is appointed by the Council and serves as the Chief Executive Officer for the City, ensuring that the policies of the Council are implemented and that the entire community is being served. The City Council also appoints and supervises the City Attorney, City Auditor, and Municipal Judge.

The City’s Fiscal Year 2019-2020 budget includes funding for 1,711.1 full-time equivalents and has an overall operating and capital budget of $1.23 billion. Operating as a full-service municipality, in addition to standard municipal governmental services, Denton also operates several major enterprise operations including Airport, Electric, Water, Wastewater, Solid Waste, and Drainage.

Municipal services and operations are guided by the City’s strategic plan which was created to ensure that the community realizes its vision and mission. In September of 2018, the City Council adopted revisions to the City’s Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan serves as the basis for the development of the Annual Operating Budget.

The Strategic Plan is organized into five Key Focus Areas (KFAs):

- Organizational Excellence;
- Public Infrastructure;
- Economic Development;
- Safe, Liveable and Family-Friendly Community; and
- Sustainable and Environmental Stewardship.

THE POSITION

Reporting directly to the City Council, the Municipal Judge presides over the Denton Municipal Court of Record and serves as a magistrate. The City Charter provides that the Municipal Judge shall be appointed for a two-year term in even-numbered years and that Alternate Municipal Judges shall be appointed in odd-numbered years. There are currently five Alternate Municipal Judges (part-time). The Municipal Court Clerks report to the Chief Financial Officer. The City’s budget provides for 2.75 FTE Judges and 14 FTE Municipal Court staff.
KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Presides over all Denton Municipal Court (Court) proceedings including arraignment and appearance dockets, non-jury trials, jury trials, special motions hearings, indigency dockets and show cause or default hearings;
- Presides over bench and jury trials set in the Court and renders judgments for Class “C” misdemeanor violations, violations of City ordinances, traffic violations, and any other cases within the jurisdiction of the Court;
- Establishes the promulgated or “window” schedule of fines applicable to citations or complaints filed with the Court;
- Establishes all daily dockets or other scheduling of hearings in the Court and directs all Court Clerks and staff regarding time and date any such dockets or hearings may be held;
- As chief administrative Judge, responsible for the development and implementation of Municipal Court Policies and Procedures in accordance with Texas statutory law related to Municipal Courts of Record, as well as the revision and creation of new systems and procedures necessary to comply with changes in Texas law as applicable to municipal courts or magistrate processes;
- As Presiding Judge, responsible for the actual creation of various forms and documents necessary for the orderly disposition of cases including pleas, special motions, requests for Driver Safety Course and Deferred Disposition as well as the actual citation format;
- Reviews probable cause affidavits and complaints prior to issuance of warrants or writs, and issues, as appropriate, warrants of arrest for individuals or search warrants for persons or places within the Court’s jurisdiction;
- Serves as a magistrate for both the City of Denton and Denton County with responsibilities including initial detention hearings of all individuals in the custody of the Denton Police Department as required under Art. 15.17 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure though daily magistration of arrestees/ detainees, admonishment of rights and setting of appropriate bail, determination of probable cause, and issuance of warrants for both “fine only” offenses as well as misdemeanor and felony warrants of arrest; Conducts appropriate “pre-trial” hearings and motions prior to trial;


KEY RESPONSIBILITIES (CONTINUED...)

- Directs Court Clerks and Court staff by way of written policies or procedures, interprets all statutory or case law related to the functions of the Court and acts as the final authority regarding questions of law or application of statutes regarding Court policy or procedure;
- Supervises and directs the Court Clerk and Deputy Court Clerks as to appropriate methods and process for maintenance of all Court records and proceedings, and acts as the chief judicial officer regarding official proceedings and documents of the Court;
- Supervises and directs Court staff responsible for administrative hearing processes under City Ordinance including administrative parking offenses, civil photo-enforcement determinations, and building condemnation as provided and allowed under City ordinance;
- As the Presiding Judge, defines and implements a selection process, and coordinates all Assistant or Alternate Judges, as well as provides for direction, scheduling, and training of those assistant positions;
- Acts as a Departmental Director for the City of Denton. In this capacity, responsible for preparation, presentation, and administration of the Judge’s Office budget as well as all personnel and policy issues related to the judicial office, including management and assignment of all alternate judges, court bailiffs and a full-time administrative assistant;
- Provides reports to the City Council regarding court activity and proposed or ongoing Court initiatives or programs and supports the budgetary processes of the Municipal Court Clerk;
- Participates in the development, installation, maintenance, and when necessary, selection of court or case management systems, software or programming;
- Responsible for the development, content and presentation of the Court’s “on-line” webpage and public access content;
- Ensures compliance with all court of record or magisterial reporting requirements as required by the Texas Office of Court Administration;
- Develops and recommends to the City Manager and City Council the annual and long-range plans for the Municipal Court; communicates with the City Council to develop common goals for the Court in the upcoming year; and
- Performs other related duties as directed by City Council or in accordance with State law.
CANDIDATE PROFILE

The ideal candidate will have strong experience and competence in general areas of municipal court operations and administration, especially with courts of record. The new Municipal Judge must have a customer focus and the ability to administer court operations in a transparent and equitable manner. The Municipal Judge will endeavor to build and maintain productive working relationships and channels of communication with the City Council, City Attorney, City Manager, City Auditor, municipal department heads and their staffs.

While Municipal Court Clerks report to other City staff, the Municipal Judge must establish productive working relationships and ensure that all operations and activities of the court adhere to established procedures, best practices, and applicable statutes.

The new Municipal Judge must be able to represent the City and City Council positively and effectively within the community, the region, and state, including potentially testifying or advocating on matters that may come before the state legislature or regulatory agencies as they apply to the Municipal Court. The Municipal Judge will remain current on the latest legislation and legislative trends and ensure that this information is available to affected Court and municipal staff.

Respecting diversity and valuing differences in race, ethnicity, gender, religious preference and sexual orientation within the workplace are expectations for the selected candidate. The Municipal Judge will exhibit candor, highly ethical behavior and an exemplary level of professional decorum, with the ability to gain the trust and confidence of elected officials, peer City Council appointees, City staff and the public. The Municipal Judge, while tactful and diplomatic, will be resolute and absolutely fair in dealings with staff and those appearing before the Court.

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- A resident of the State of Texas and a citizen of the United States;
- Graduation from an ABA accredited school of law;
- An attorney licensed to practice law in the State of Texas with two (2) or more years of experience in practicing law in Texas;
- A Texas Class “C” driver’s license or the ability to obtain within thirty days of employment; OR
- Any combination of related education, experience, certifications or licenses that will result in a candidate successfully performing the essential functions of the job.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Bilingual in Spanish and English;
- Minimum of five (5) years of experience as a judge, magistrate, prosecutor, or defense counsel with associated experience in appearing in a municipal court in Texas;
- Municipal Court of Record experience in a growing city reasonably comparable to the City of Denton in size and complexity;
- Exceptional communications and presentation abilities;
- A record of participation and professional networking in legal and court associations as they benefit the City.
APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

Qualified candidates should submit their cover letter and resume online by visiting our website at: https://bakertilly.recruitmenthome.com/postings/2602.

Interested applicants are strongly encouraged to apply by Monday, May 11, 2020. Following the first review date, applications will be screened against the criteria provided in the brochure, and the City Council may consider offering interviews to selected candidates. Interviews in Denton will be offered to those candidates named as finalists, with reference checks, background checks, and academic verifications conducted after receiving candidates’ permission.

For more information about this position, please contact:

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Applicants for this position selected as finalists will be subject to a criminal history/credit/driver’s license check prior to interview. While the consultant and City of Denton will endeavor to maintain confidentiality, under Texas statutes, information from your resume may be subject to release to the public at any stage of the recruitment process.

The City of Denton is an equal opportunity employer and values diversity at all levels of its workforce.