

CITY OF RAMSEY
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS AND PROPOSALS
FOR LEGAL SERVICES
MAY 2021

7550 SUNWOOD DRIVE NW
RAMSEY, MN 55303

SCHEDULE

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS AND PROPOSALS

LEGAL SERVICES

Distribute/Advertise RFP's	May 26, 2021
RFP Submittals	Due: July 9, 2021
Staff Committee Evaluation	Completed by: August 6, 2021
City Council Interviews	Completed by: August 17, 2021
City Council Approval	By September 14, 2021

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Introduction

The City of Ramsey is inviting interested law firms with experience representing cities that have a similar complexity in municipal civil matters to submit written proposals to provide City Attorney services. Municipal experience is defined as representing and/or advising cities on issues that are regularly encountered in the course of municipal activities. ***Proposals are requested for Civil Legal Services.*** The City Attorney will be selected by the City Council and will also work closely with the Council, City Administrator and other City Staff.

Background

The City of Ramsey is a Charter City, located in Anoka County, with an estimated present population of 27,000. Ramsey operates under the Council/Administrator form of government and is governed by a City Council comprised of a Mayor and six Council members. The Mayor and two members of Council are elected at-large. Four members of Council are elected to represent Wards. All members are elected to four year terms.

Ramsey provides an extensive array of services including public works, police, fire, parks, planning and zoning, economic development, finance and internal management support functions. The City has 85 full-time employees and 12 part-time employees, and 38 paid-on-call firefighters. The City belongs to a property, liability, and workers' comprehensive insurance pool comprised of numerous cities, which is operated by the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust. The City's Economic Development Authority is appointed by the City Council and operates as an advisory board to the City Council.

This contract for Legal Services is scheduled to start on or about October 1, 2021.

General Instructions

- A. Responses must provide complete information as described in this request. Nine (9) copies shall be submitted by 4:30 p.m. on Friday, July 9, 2021. The proposals shall be marked: City of Ramsey, Legal Services RFP and sent to: City of Ramsey
Attn: Colleen Lasher, Administrative Services Director
7550 Sunwood Drive NW
Ramsey, MN 55303
- B. To ensure fairness and uniformity, firms submitting responses are requested to not contact City Staff or the City Council: Questions about this RFP may be made to **Kurt Ulrich, City Administrator** at kulrich@cityoframsey.com or 763-433-9845, prior to submission deadline.
- C. The City will not reimburse any expenses incurred by the firm submitting responses including, but not limited to, expenses associated with the preparation and submission of the response and attendance at interview(s).

- D. The City reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to request additional information from any or all Proposers, and to suggest modifications to the terms and conditions or a retainer agreement from that offered by a Proposer.

BASIC SERVICES REQUESTED

Basic services, for the purpose of this proposal, shall include those legal services generally understood within the field of municipal law to fall within the category of “general counsel” work, and shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

- Routine legal advice, telephone and personal consultations with the City Council, City department heads or authorized representatives.
- Assistance in the preparation and review of ordinances, resolutions, agreements, contracts, forms, notices, certificates, deeds and other documents required by the City.
- Attendance at regular City Council meetings and special meetings as requested. Regular meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Include alternate per meeting charge if attendance at regular meetings is not required.
- Attendance at other board, commission and committee meetings, upon request.
- Three (3) business day response time on council and staff inquiries; five (5) business day turnaround on standard document review (contracts, council cases, legal documents).
- Office hours of 1:00 to 4:00 on the first and third Wednesdays of the month and attendance at staff meetings during those hours for Civil Attorney.
- Meetings with City staff, upon request.
- Legal advice and opinions concerning legal matters that affect the City.
- Legal advice and opinions regarding the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act.
- Legal advice and opinions regarding Minnesota election law and matters.
- Legal work pertaining to initial proceedings and defense of the City in certain litigation.
- Legal work pertaining to the water, wastewater, streets, parks, and planning & zoning departments.
- Guidance on City personnel matters and policies, including employee disciplinary and grievance issues, Veterans preference, FLSA, etc.
- Legal work pertaining to property acquisitions, property disposals, public improvements, easement dedications, right-of-way vacations, annexations, platting, land development, TIF financing & reporting and tax abatement issues.
- Legal work pertaining to the Economic Development Authority
- Legal work pertaining to the City Charter Commission
- Enforcement of City codes, zoning regulations, and building standards through administrative and judicial actions.
- Monitoring of pending and current state and federal legislation and court decisions, as appropriate.
- Notification of League of Minnesota Cities in legal matters where the League may or will defend the City.

- Coordination of outside legal counsel, as needed and as directed by the City Council.

REQUIRED PROPOSAL ELEMENTS

The proposal must provide specific and succinct answers to all questions and requests for information. Direct, precise and complete responses will serve as an advantage to the applicant. **Proposals are requested for Civil Legal Services.**

BACKGROUND

Describe the nature of your practice or your law firm's practice and your qualifications for providing City Attorney services. Include a professional chronology for the individual who will be designated to serve as City Attorney, as well as for others whom you anticipate being involved with providing legal services to the City.

Provide the overall capabilities, qualifications, training and areas of expertise for each of the principals, partners, and associates of the law firm, including the length of employment for each person and his/her area of specialization.

Provide the following for each person whom you propose to designate as City Attorney and for each person you propose to designate as a deputy or back-up:

- Legal training and number of years of practice, including date of admission to the Minnesota Bar Association, number of years of municipal or other local public section law practice as a full-time local government attorney and/or in a private law office specializing in local government.
- Professional affiliations.
- Knowledge of, and experience with, Minnesota Municipal Law or other public sector experience, and redevelopment law.
- Litigation experience and demonstration of good court track record. Cite examples.
- Knowledge and practice of law relating to land use and planning, environmental law, risk management, redevelopment, general plans, real estate and other related law.
- Experience in the area of contracts and franchises.
- Experience in the area of personnel, disability law rights and obligations, workers' compensation, employee relations and negotiations and employee discrimination claims.
- Experience in the preparation and review of ordinances and resolutions.
- Types of clientele represented and years representing each.
- Office location and accessibility to the City.

If the firm/individual, or any of the attorneys employed by the firm, have ever been sued by cities or other clients for malpractice, been the subject of complaints filed with the State Bar, or had discipline imposed by the State Bar, please provide information about the

nature of the incident, the dates of when the matter began and was concluded, and the results of the situation.

CITY/CITY ATTORNEY RELATIONSHIP

Describe how you would structure the working relationship between the City Attorney and the City Council and Staff.

Describe how you would meet the response time described in the RFP for Council/Staff inquiries and document review.

Describe the systems or mechanisms that would be established for monthly reporting on the status of projects, requests and litigation.

Describe the computer resources currently utilized in your office. The City will require compatibility with Microsoft Word for Windows, as well as the maintenance of Internet service, such that email and files that can be transmitted between City staff and City Attorney. City Attorney will be required to access and utilize the City's LaserFiche document system for research of city archive documents.

CLIENTS/CONFLICT OF INTEREST

List all public clients for whom you or your firm currently provide services under a fee for services basis or on a retainer basis. Identify any foreseeable or potential conflicts of interest that could result from such representation and the manner in which you would propose to resolve such conflicts. Identify the process you or your firm utilizes to identify and resolve conflict of interest.

For the person to be designated as City Attorney, list all public clients that person presently represents as city attorney or general counsel, along with the meeting dates and times for each governing body. *(If appointed, the City Attorney shall not accept any client or project, which would knowingly place it in conflict of interest with the services to be provided to the City. If a conflict of interest should develop, the Attorney shall be responsible for taking the necessary steps to comport its representation of the City with the Lawyers Code of Professional Responsibility. The Attorney may be responsible for any additional costs incurred by the City in obtaining legal representation if such representation becomes necessary due to a conflict of interest.)*

COMPENSATION

Provide the pricing schedule you will use to charge the City for providing services as outlined in this Request for Proposal. Describe how the individual or firm intends to provide legal services, either on an hourly rate, or on a monthly retainer, indicate what services are to be provided. It is not the intent of the City to select a firm purely on the basis of compensation, but to negotiate a method of compensation with the successful

firm that best satisfies mutual needs of the City and the firm. In addition, provide the following:

- Define what type(s) of work you would consider to be extra or specialized work that would be billed in addition to basic services.
- State the hourly rates for specialized service.
- State the rate for meeting attendance, if any, whether hourly or otherwise.
- Identify the minimum increment of time billed for each service, e.g. phone calls, correspondence, personal conference.
- Define the type and unit rates for reimbursement of expenses such as mileage, reproduction of documents, faxed documents and word processing charges.

PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES

Provide five (5) professional references for the individual designated as City Attorney, including addresses and work telephone numbers. References should be currently employed public agency officials or agents.

EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

Proposals will be screened and the candidates will be interviewed by the City Council. Qualifications will be verified and references will be checked. In reviewing proposals, the City will carefully weigh the following:

- Depth and breadth of experience and expertise in the practice of law, specifically in those areas most often encountered in municipal government operations.
- Capability to perform legal services promptly and in a manner that permits the City Council and staff to meet established deadlines and to operate in an effective and efficient manner.
- Degree of availability for quick response to inquiries that arise out of day-to-day operating questions or problems.
- Degree to which firm and individual attorneys stay current through continued professional development and active communication with practitioners in the municipal law field.
- Communication skills.
- Cost of services.
- Location of the firm's office.
- Other qualifications/criteria, as deemed appropriate by the City Council.

The contract will require that the individuals or law firm selected as City Attorney maintain general liability, automobile, workers' compensation, and errors and omissions insurance. The contract will also contain provisions requiring the selected individual or law firm to indemnify the City and provide that the City Attorney is an independent contractor serving at the will of the City Council. Other required provisions will include the City Council's right to terminate the agreement, at its sole discretion, upon the provision of notice.

The City requires compliance with Equal Opportunity regulations and therefore, the firm selected shall not discriminate under the contract against any person in accordance with federal, state or local regulation and shall certify to such in their proposal.

The City anticipates the original contract will be two (2) years in length.

The City will not provide reimbursement to anyone for any expense incurred that is associated with the preparation and submission of the proposal and attendance at interviews.

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

Proposal must be received by 4:30 p.m. on Friday, July 9, 2021.

The City Council reserves the right to reject all proposals, to request additional information concerning any proposal for purposes of clarification, to accept or negotiate any modification to any proposal following the deadline for receipt of all proposals, and to waive any irregularities if such would serve the best interests of the City as determined by the City Council.