

CITY OF JONESBORO REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

RFP-ADM-2025-001

PROFESSIONAL LEGAL SERVICES - CITY ATTORNEY

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

The City of Jonesboro, Georgia (the “City,”) invites interested legal firms or qualified individuals to submit written proposals to provide contracted legal services to the City. The successful firm must be able to provide a designated, primary individual to serve as City Attorney, and he or she should have the capability to provide expertise in the area of general municipal law and prior experience in the following subject areas is desirable: drafting municipal resolutions and ordinances; responding to open records requests; ethics compliance; procurement, land use and zoning matters, and representing and advising the City, elected officials, and administrative boards. The position also includes sharing litigation responsibilities and meaningful litigation experience is required.

All proposals submitted must demonstrate the qualifications, competencies, depth of legal knowledge, experience and capability to provide the highest quality legal services to the City in compliance with the requirements of this Request for Proposal (RFP). Proposals must address all elements outlined in the RFP and be written in a straightforward, concise manner that describes the proposer’s ability to meet the legal needs of the City. Proposals may be submitted by firms utilizing multiple Georgia licensed attorneys within their firm and naming a lead attorney. Proposals will also be accepted from Georgia licensed attorneys who form a consortium for the purposes of this RFP and name a lead attorney. The lead attorney named in either case will be designated as the City Attorney and be charged with overseeing all work of other attorneys and legal staff providing services to the City.

City Attorney Services will be for a term of twelve (12) months with the option to renew for an additional twelve (12) months. If interested in this opportunity, Proposals may be submitted to:

ChaQuias Miller-Thornton, City Manager, cmthornton@jonesboroga.gov

Proposals must be received no later than 5 p.m., Wednesday, February 12, 2025. Proposals received after this time will not be considered.

All inquiries regarding this RFP should be directed to City Manager Miller-Thornton by email at cmthornton@jonesboroga.gov no later than Wednesday, February 5th, 2025.

The City reserves the right to reject all or any part of any or all proposals, to waive technical or legal deficiencies and to accept any proposal that it deems to be in the best interest of the City. The Mayor and Council reserve the right to reject any or all proposals, request additional information concerning any proposal for purposes of clarification, and to waive any irregularities if such action serves the City's best interest as determined solely by the Mayor and Council.

SECTION 2: SCOPE OF SERVICES

In furtherance of those duties set forth in Section 3.12 of the City Charter, the City Attorney is expected to perform all general legal representation for the City as required. Such general legal representation includes, but is not limited to:

- Act as general legal counsel in all City-related matters as requested by the Mayor, City Council, City Manager, and other authorized officers and employees of the City.
- Attend all regular and special called meetings of the City Council.
- Attend regular and special called meetings of other designated boards, commissions or committees as may be occasionally directed by the Mayor, Council, or City Manager.
- Respond, within a reasonable timeframe, to inquiries from the City and third parties regarding City operations and actions.
- Legislative work associated with City Council meetings, including preparation or review of ordinances and resolutions, and written policies and procedures, together with research work, as necessary, associated with the preparation of those documents. This activity shall include providing assessments of legal likelihoods in support of City risk analyses.
- Prepare oral or written opinions on legal matters as required by the Mayor, City Council and/or the City Manager.
- Negotiate and prepare agreements, leases, contracts, or similar documents.
- Draft/review and approve as to form all contracts to which the City is a party.
- Ensure the City complies with federal and State law, City Charter, local ordinances and City policies.
- The City Attorney or a designated attorney from the City Attorney's office will represent the City in all litigation matters (litigation matters, meaning all actions filed in Federal, Superior Court or State Court against the City) and administrative tribunal matters, not covered by insurance, involving the City's elected officials, officers, and personnel acting in the course of City business.
- Coordinate the work of third-party legal professionals, providing service on behalf of the City or in the interest of the City. Oversee, in a cost-effective manner, litigation in which the City is represented by the City's insurance carriers.
- Review and comment on contract form(s) between the City and independent contractors.
- When requested by the Mayor, Council, and/or by the City Manager, perform investigations that may require interviewing witnesses, taking testimony, review of reports, and legal research.
- Provide legal counseling, guidance and opinions to the Mayor, City Manager, and Department Directors regarding the operations of the City; provided, however, except in the event of an emergency, all requests made by Department Directors for such legal counseling, guidance and opinions shall be channeled through the City Manager.
- Participate in meetings and/or telephone conferences with the Mayor and City Manager and/or City staff as requested by the Mayor or City Manager.
- Provide staff assistance, legal research and counseling related to the acquisition or sale of real property, preparation of leases, deeds and easements; utility franchise agreements;

referendum questions, contracts, surety/performance/payment bonds, insurance policies, bills of sale, liens, waivers, subordinations, and other legal instruments; liability situations; grant guidelines; arbitration; and other matters as necessary requiring legal advice.

- Maintain legal files and provide to the Mayor and City Manager copies of all correspondence, and all pleadings and orders in all litigation the City Attorney is handling for the City.
- Keep the Mayor, City Council and the City Manager informed of legislation or judicial decisions that have the potential to impact the City.
- Perform other professional duties as may be required including, but not limited to, conducting legal research as required for the performance of duties representing the City. Assist with other legal matters as may be requested by the Mayor, City Council or City Manager.
- Participate in special projects as authorized by the Mayor, City Council, or City Manager, including, but not limited to, the negotiation for sale of purchase of real estate, including fee ownership and easements and acquisition of interest in real estate through the exercise of eminent domain by the City. The City Attorney or their designee shall oversee the City's real estate, title and closing matters.
- Provides guidance and legal advice on the Georgia Open Meetings Act, the Georgia Open Records Act, Robert's Rules of Order, and City of Jonesboro rules, policies and procedures.

SECTION 3: SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

Qualifications

The City is seeking a City Attorney with the requisite municipal government experience necessary to provide sound legal guidance that is well-researched and defensible. A thorough understanding of Georgia municipal law is required. The City Attorney must provide expertise in the area of general municipal law and prior experience in the following subject areas is desirable: drafting municipal resolutions and ordinances; responding to open records requests; ethics compliance; procurement, land use and zoning matters, and representing and advising the City, elected officials, and administrative boards. The position also includes sharing litigation responsibilities and meaningful litigation experience is required.

The City Attorney must be a member of the State Bar of Georgia for at least 15 years in good standing and have a broad range of experience and knowledge in local government law. In addition to experience, the City Attorney must be an excellent communicator and writer who understands the City Attorney role well, values relationships, and presents a professional demeanor. The City Attorney must be able to quickly gain the confidence of the Mayor, City Council, City Manager and Department Heads by demonstrating a commitment to accessibility, prompt responses and collaboration.

Compensation

The City is responsible for being a good steward of public funds and is committed to negotiating fair, but cost-effective, compensation for legal services. The City believes these goals are met by compensating the City Attorney with a fixed monthly retainer for as many of the routine and

definable services as possible listed in the above Scope of Services. All responses to the RFP must include a proposed monthly retainer amount and a proposed hourly rate for all legal professionals who will provide services to the City. The City will consider alternate compensation proposals but will give greater consideration to proposals described above.

Proposal Requirements

The proposal must include responses to each of the following. Additional information may be provided in support of the proposal.

1. Name, address, phone number and email address of the person to whom questions about this proposal should be directed.
2. Brief description of the firm, including size and practice areas.
3. Office address, along with names, phone numbers, and email addresses for the proposed City Attorney and other legal professionals who would be assigned to provide service to the City.
4. Qualifications of the person(s) proposed to be assigned to provide service to the City including:
 - Education, date of Georgia Bar admittance and total years of practice experience
 - Experience providing legal services to Georgia municipal or county government
 - Litigation experience
 - Real estate transaction experience
5. Compensation proposal as described above.
6. Circumstances and final resolution of any disciplinary action taken by any bar association against any attorney who will be assigned to provide services to the city.
7. List of no less than three client references (names, phone numbers and email addresses) the City may contact to discuss relevant experience of persons proposed to provide the requested legal services.
8. Cover letter describing the interest in being selected to provide the requested legal services and any other information not otherwise included in the proposal believed to be useful in selecting the City Attorney.

Please note that all responses will be subject to the Open Records Act

SECTION 4: EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

1. To be considered, all proposals are due and must be submitted on or before 5:00 p.m., Wednesday, February 12, 2025. Regardless of reason, proposals received after this date and time will not be considered.
2. Proposals should be submitted to City Manager ChaQuias Miller Thornton at cmthornton@jonesboroga.gov
3. All Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by the Mayor.
4. The following will be taken into consideration during the evaluation process
 - a. Qualifications and information contained in the Response;
 - b. Complete and clear answers in the Response;
 - c. Familiarity with laws and regulations governing local governments;
 - d. Demonstrated expertise and experience in local government law;
 - e. Range of services offered and available support staff; Demonstration of workload capacity commensurate with the level of service required by the City;
 - f. Professional reputation for providing high-quality services, ability to work cooperatively with Mayor, City Council, City Manager, and department heads;
5. Preference will be given to specific overall local government experience of the individual providing City Attorney Services and associated individuals, as well as factors such as total projected cost of service, accessibility to the City, immediacy of availability and responsiveness to the Request for Proposals.
6. Assuming a successful response and the selection and negotiation of a contract for City Attorney, it is anticipated that the Mayor will submit a nomination to City Council for confirmation at a Council Meeting during the month of February 2025.