

Request For Proposals

City Legal Services



**Proposals must be received no later than 4:30 p.m. on
Monday, November 3, 2025.**

Introduction and Background

The City of Dassel seeks to retain the services of legal consultants to act as the City Attorney and staff for municipal government legal services.

About Dassel

The City of Dassel, with a population of about 1,500, is located in Central Minnesota between St. Cloud and Hutchinson, and less than 60 miles from the Twin Cities metropolitan area. The City is a Plan A Statutory City with a Council-Administrator form of government.

City Council

The City Council is the final review and approval authority regarding all contracts, payments, Plans, improvements, policies & procedures, and other business of the City. The 5-person Council is composed of four Councilmembers and the Mayor, each serving four-year terms.

- Bob Lalone, Mayor
- Amy Gaertner, Councilmember
- Dan Landrus, Councilmember
- Deb Suchy, Councilmember
- Marie Thurn, Councilmember

City Administrator

The City Administrator reviews and coordinates all matters coming before the City Council and is responsible for the implementation of Council direction and the coordination and management of City departments. Renee Eckerly is the City's administrator and has served in this role since May 2024.

City Staff

The City of Dassel has 9 full-time, 8 part-time and 1 seasonal/temporary staff across four departments: Administration, Public Works, Museum and Municipal Liquor Store. In addition, the City has 21 volunteer firefighters in its Fire Department.

Schedule

City Council Approval of RFP	September 22, 2025
Distribute/Advertise RFP	October 3, 2025
RFP Submittals Due	November 3, 2025
City Council Interviews	November 12 & November 13, 2025 at 5:30 pm
City Council Approval	November 17, 2025

Overview of Services Requested

The services requested include, but are not limited to following:

1. Act as an Advisor to the City Council, Planning Board, and relevant boards and staff.
Relevant duties include:
 - Attend City Council, Planning Board, and other boards or staff meetings as requested by the City Administrator or City Council.
 - Prepare timely opinions on issues including zoning, re-zoning, platting, issuance of permits, conditional use permits, variances, lot splits, and procedural matters dealing with the operation of the City Council and its boards.
2. The City Attorney's office advises on acquisitions and negotiations, public improvement projects, 429 process, including sanitary sewer, water storm water and street improvements.
3. Manage assessment appeals to the District Court.
4. Provide counsel on matters of economic development activities including economic development loans, housing incentives, large scale redevelopments, enforcement, and real estate law.
5. In collaboration with staff to draft or update ordinance language as needed as well as the enforcement of ordinances.
6. Prepare documents including development agreements, Planned Unit Development (PUD) agreements, contracts, leases, easements and resolutions.
7. Assist with negotiation for the acquisition, sale, or transfer of title to personal property.
8. Advise on annexation and orderly annexation agreements.
9. Advise on land acquisition or sale by the City for miscellaneous purposes including parks.
10. Provide general advice to the City regarding building permits, zoning, platting, assistance with insurance issues, property maintenance and code enforcement.

11. Provide legal representation in all civil actions brought against the City that are not covered by the City's liability insurance. Situations requiring legal representation may include:
 - Legal action being brought following a Planning Board and or City Council decision whereby a developer or applicant requests the court that the action be overturned.
 - Condemnation for land, street and utility right-of-way.
 - Actions being brought either by or against the City regarding violations of the City Code.
 - Injunctions brought for or against the City where Dassel's liability insurance carrier defends the claims.
12. The City has retained separate legal counsel for labor and criminal services.

Proposal Contents & Instructions

Interested firms may submit a proposal for the legal service requested in this RFP document. In addition to the information included below, proposals should include the following:

- Name of the firm
- Services to be rendered
- Local address
- Telephone number
- Contact person's name, email and telephone number

Proposals shall also include:

- The areas of expertise and general services available
- The general qualifications of the firm as related to the requested services
- An explanation of how the services outlined in the scope of work will be provided including the firm's approach and capacity including permanent attorney assignments at other public sector clients
- Current resume of the person who will be responsible for fulfilling the obligations as City Attorney to the City, and his/her designees
- Resumes of the other professional staff who will be responsible for providing support legal services
- Expectation for how the attorney(s) will be available and responsive to City personnel and preferred contact methods
- Summary of legal services provided at other municipalities and relevant references including contact information
- Disclosures of all potential conflicts of interest if firm is to provide services to the City

- Explanation of firm's research capabilities for clients including the ability to track legal costs by project or case and by attorney and to search legal invoices by key word
- Copy of firm's most recent audit or financial report

Proposals must be sent via email* to:

Renee Eckerly, Administrator
Renee.eckerly@dassel.com

*Please do not send hard copy proposals.

Proposal Evaluation and Contract Award

The City intends to award a contract to the firm identified as most qualified to perform the services to the City. Cost of services will also be a factor in selection. Following submissions of proposals, staff will be in contact with firms should they be invited to participate in an interview. Selection of firms will take place on November 17, 2025 with formal action by the City Council.

The City shall not be liable for any expenses incurred by the proposer including, but not limited to, expenses associated with the preparation of the proposal or final contract negotiations.

The City of Dassel reserves the right to reject any and all proposals or to request additional information from interested firms.

Contract Execution, Ethics and Anti-Discrimination Policy

Negotiations

Notwithstanding a contract award, the City reserves the right to negotiate the final terms and conditions of the contract to be executed. Should the City and the firm to whom the contract is recommended to be awarded be unable to mutually agree upon the entire contract, the City reserves the right to discontinue negotiations. Select another firm or reject all of the proposals. Upon completion of negotiations agreeable to the City and the firm to be retained, a contract shall be executed.

Ethics & Anti-Discrimination Policy

No elected official or employee of the City who exercises any responsibilities in review, approval or implementation of the proposal or contract shall participate in any decision which affects his/her direct or indirect personal or financial interest.

It is a breach of ethical standards for any person to offer, give or agree to give any City employee or Council person or for any City employee or Council person to solicit, demand,

accept or agree to accept from another person or firm, a gratuity or an offer of employment whenever a consideration was motivated by an individual, group or corporate desire to obtain special, preferential, or more favorable treatment than is normally accorded to the general public.

The firm shall not assign any interest in this contract and shall not transfer any interest in the same without prior written consent of the City.

The firm shall not accept any client or project which, by nature, places it in an ethical conflict with its representation of the City of Dassel.

The City requires affirmative action and, therefore, the firm selected shall not discriminate under the contract against any person in accordance with federal, state or local regulations.