
ZEBULON

NORTH CAROLINA

Request for Qualifications

Municipal Legal Services

For

Town of

Zebulon,

North Carolina

Due April 23, 2026

I. Introduction

The Town of Zebulon, North Carolina, is seeking qualifications from experienced law firms to provide municipal legal services to the Town. The selected firm will serve as the Town Attorney and provide legal advice and representation to the Town's governing board, Town Manager, and municipal departments.

Zebulon operates under a council-manager form of government. The Town is experiencing sustained population and development growth and seeks legal counsel with demonstrated expertise in North Carolina municipal law to support effective governance and municipal operations.

The Board of Commissioners appoints the Town Attorney.

II. Scope of Legal Services

The selected firm will provide comprehensive municipal legal services to the Town.

Services may include, but are not limited to:

a. Governing Board Support

- Attendance at regular and special meetings of the Board of Commissioners
- Legal advice regarding municipal governance and statutory authority
- Drafting and review of ordinances, resolutions, and policies
- Guidance related to North Carolina Open Meetings Law

b. Municipal Operations

- Legal advice to the Town Manager and municipal departments
- Review and drafting of contracts and agreements
- Procurement and risk management guidance

c. Land Use and Development

- Advice regarding zoning and land use regulations
- Legal guidance related to quasi-judicial hearings
- Development agreements and annexation matters

d. Employment and Personnel

- Advice regarding personnel policies and employment matters

- Guidance on employee discipline and termination
 - Representation or coordination regarding employment-related claims
- e. Public Records and Transparency
- Advice regarding compliance with the North Carolina Public Records Law
 - Guidance regarding records requests and statutory exemptions
- f. Litigation
- Representation of the Town in litigation when appropriate
 - Coordination with specialized outside counsel when necessary
 - Claims and liability management
- g. Economic Development
- Legal review of development agreements and incentive agreements
 - Guidance related to public-private partnerships and economic development initiatives

III. Firm Qualifications

Firms responding to this RFQ should demonstrate significant experience in North Carolina municipal law and experience advising municipalities operating under a council-manager form of government.

a. Municipal Experience

Firms should demonstrate experience representing municipalities that are similar in size, growth patterns, or development dynamics to the Town of Zebulon.

For each comparable municipality listed, provide:

- Municipality name
- Approximate population
- Description of legal services provided
- Description of the municipality's growth or development conditions
- Duration of representation

b. Assigned Attorneys

Identify the attorneys who will serve as primary counsel to the Town.

For each assigned attorney, provide:

- Years of experience practicing municipal law
- Areas of specialization relevant to municipal representation
- Number of municipal clients currently served
- Role with those municipalities (lead counsel, supporting counsel, etc.)

IV. Proposal Submission Requirements

Submissions should include the following:

- a. Cover letter expressing interest in providing services
 - Firm overview including size, offices, and areas of practice
 - Identification and resumes of assigned attorneys
 - Description of municipal clients served
 - Staffing and client service approach
 - At least three municipal client references
 - Fee structure and billing practices
 - Conflict of interest disclosure
 - Transition approach for onboarding or transition of legal services
- b. Municipal Advisory Scenario

Respondents should provide a written response to the following scenario:

A rapidly growing municipality is experiencing increased development activity and public interest in zoning and land use decisions. During a quasi-judicial hearing on a controversial development proposal, members of the governing board express strong opinions before the hearing is completed.

Describe how you would advise the governing board and staff to ensure compliance with North Carolina law and preserve the fairness and defensibility of the decision-making process.

V. Evaluation Criteria

- Municipal Experience and Comparable Communities — 30%
- Lead Attorney Qualifications and Capacity — 25%
- Understanding of Municipal Governance and Development Law — 15%
- Staffing Capacity and Responsiveness — 15%

- Client References and Reputation — 10
- Fee Structure — 5%

VI. Selection Process

- RFQ Issuance
- Proposal Submission Deadline
- Staff Evaluation of Proposals
- Staff Interviews with Finalists
- Board Work Session Interviews with Finalists
- Board Appointment of Town Attorney

VII. Term of Engagement

The selected firm will enter into a professional services agreement with the Town.

The anticipated term is three (3) years with optional one-year renewal periods upon mutual agreement. The final term will be contingent upon approval of the Board.

VIII. RFQ Schedule

- RFQ Issued: March 24, 2026
- Proposal Deadline: April 23, 2026
- Staff Evaluation Period: April 24– May 6, 2026
- Board Interviews: May 18, 2026
- Board Appointment: Prior to July 1, 2026

IX. Submission Instructions

Proposals must be submitted electronically by the stated deadline.

Point of Contact: Jeremy Crawford

Jcrawford@townofzebulon.org

Town Clerk

General Conditions

The Town reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, waive minor informalities, request additional information, or select a firm based solely on submitted qualifications.

Respondents must disclose any conflicts of interest, including representation of developers or entities with active interests within the Town.

The selected firm must maintain professional liability insurance and provide proof of coverage upon contract execution.

All legal files and records related to Town matters are considered Town records and must be made available to the Town upon request or termination of services.

XI. Confidential and Privileged Information

The Town currently receives legal services from outside counsel and maintains attorney-client privileged communications and legal files related to municipal operations and matters. In order to preserve attorney-client privilege and maintain fairness in the procurement process, the Town will not provide access to confidential or privileged legal materials during the RFQ process.

All responding firms, including the Town's current legal counsel, should prepare submissions based solely on publicly available information and the information provided within this RFQ.

The Town reserves the right to continue working with current legal counsel during the RFQ process to ensure continuity of legal services.