



120 N. Main Ave, PO Box 326, Alburnett, Iowa 52202

## **Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for City Attorney**

### **1. Introduction**

The City of Alburnett, Iowa, is requesting qualifications from qualified law firms to provide municipal legal services to the City as City Attorney, with a designated primary attorney and appropriate supporting staff.

The City is seeking to establish a professional relationship with a firm that demonstrates strong experience in Iowa municipal law, responsiveness to City needs, and the ability to provide practical, proactive legal guidance to elected officials and City staff.

This Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is intended to identify firms with the experience, qualifications, and approach best suited to serve the City's legal needs. Appointment of the City Attorney shall be made by the City Council and approved by resolution.

### **2. Background**

The City of Alburnett is a small municipality governed by a Mayor-Council form of government. The City Attorney serves at the discretion of the City Council and acts as legal counsel for the City in all matters affecting the City's interests, as outlined in Chapter 20 of the Alburnett Code of Ordinances.

The City seeks a firm that values collaboration, clear communication, and timely responses, and that understands the operational realities of a small city with variable legal service needs.

### **3. Scope of Services**

The selected firm shall provide legal services consistent with the duties of the City Attorney as defined in Chapter 20 of the Alburnett Code of Ordinances, including but not limited to:

- Acting as legal counsel for the City in all matters affecting the City's interests
- Prosecuting or defending actions and proceedings on behalf of the City when requested
- Preparing and reviewing ordinances, resolutions, and amendments
- Reviewing and providing legal opinions on contracts, agreements, and other City documents
- Providing legal advice and written opinions to the Mayor, City Council, and City Clerk
- Drafting contracts, forms, and other legal documents as requested
- Attending City Council meetings as requested
- Representing the City before courts, boards, commissions, or tribunals as needed



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The City values legal counsel that is responsive, proactive, and practical, providing guidance that supports informed decision-making while managing legal risk.

#### **4. Qualifications**

Responding firms should demonstrate:

- Experience providing legal services to Iowa municipalities
- Knowledge of Iowa municipal law, including but not limited to:
  - Zoning and land use
  - Code enforcement
  - Public meetings and records
  - Contracts and procurement
  - Employment and governance matters
- Experience advising elected officials and public-sector staff
- Ability to provide timely responses and clear, understandable legal guidance
- Capacity to support the City through a designated primary attorney with backup coverage

The firm must be licensed to practice law in the State of Iowa and be in good standing with the Iowa Supreme Court Attorney Disciplinary Board.

#### **5. Designated Attorney & Staffing**

Each responding firm must identify:

- A designated primary attorney who would serve as the City's primary point of contact
- Supporting attorneys or staff who may assist with City matters
- A description of how continuity of service will be maintained in the event the primary attorney is unavailable

#### **6. Fee Structure**

The City anticipates that legal needs may fluctuate and therefore seeks a flexible fee structure.

Respondents shall provide hourly rates for:

- Primary attorney
- Other attorneys
- Paralegals or support staff (if applicable)

Respondents may optionally propose a retainer arrangement. Any proposed retainer must clearly explain:



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- Services covered by the retainer
- How the retainer would be utilized during low-activity periods
- Whether unused hours or funds would carry forward

The City is not obligated to select or accept a retainer proposal.

## **7. Submittal Requirements & Instructions**

Interested firms shall submit the following:

1. Cover letter expressing interest in serving as City Attorney
2. Firm overview and municipal law experience
3. Description of relevant experience with Iowa municipalities
4. Identification of the designated primary attorney and key supporting staff, including resumes
5. Description of the firm's approach to client service in a municipal setting
6. Fee schedule and any optional retainer proposal
7. At least three references from current or recent municipal clients

All responses to this RFQ must be received no later than 5:00 PM on March 9, 2026. Responses will be accepted electronically via email to [cityclerk@alburnettia.org](mailto:cityclerk@alburnettia.org) or hard copy delivered to:

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## **8. Evaluation Criteria**

Responses will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Relevant municipal law experience
- Qualifications and experience of the designated primary attorney
- Firm capacity and continuity of service
- Demonstrated understanding of the City's needs
- Approach to client service in a municipal setting
- Fee structure and overall value

The City reserves the right to request additional information or clarification from respondents.

## **9. Selection Process**



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The City of Alburnett will evaluate submissions based on the qualifications, experience, proposed approach, and references provided. The City Council anticipates selecting a shortlist of two to three firms for further consideration. Interviews may be conducted at the discretion of the City Council.

Final selection and appointment of the City Attorney shall be made by resolution of the City Council.

#### **10. Term and Termination**

The City Attorney shall serve at the discretion of the City Council. The City Council reserves the right to terminate the appointment at any time.

The City's intent is to establish an ongoing professional relationship with legal counsel to support municipal operations and governance.

#### **11. Timeline**

- RFQ Approval by City Council: February 12, 2026
- RFQ Release: Following Council approval
- Submissions Due: March 9, 2026, at 5:00 PM
- Council Review / Shortlisting: March 12, 2026
- Interviews (if conducted): Late March / Early April
- Appointment by Resolution: April 9, 2026

The City reserves the right to adjust this schedule as needed.

#### **12. Reservation of Rights**

The City of Alburnett reserves the right to reject any or all responses, to waive informalities, and to enter into such agreement as deemed to be in the best interest of the City.