

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS  
PROFESSIONAL LEGAL SERVICES CONTRACTS  
TOWN OF AMHERST, NEW YORK**

The Town of Amherst (Town) is requesting proposals (RFP) from qualified individuals and firms to provide legal services for Real Property Tax Law Article 7 proceedings (tax certiorari proceedings) and related matters. Using this RFP, the Town intends to establish a pool of attorneys who will be available to provide legal services as needed during the contract term. One or more individual/firms may be selected to provide services. If selected, a retainer agreement will be requested at a compensation rate agreed upon

The Town Attorney for the Town seeking litigation and defense counsel services as it is frequently called upon to provide outside counsel for defense and representation in various tax certiorari and tax assessment proceedings. The subject matter of such litigation includes all aspects of said proceedings. Counsel will have a close working relationship with the Town Attorney and Town Assessor.

Copies of the complete Request For Proposals may be obtained from the Town's website at [www.amherst.ny.us](http://www.amherst.ny.us) or by sending an e-mail request to [townattorney@amherst.ny.us](mailto:townattorney@amherst.ny.us).

The deadline for delivery of responses to this request is 4:00 p.m. on May 23, 2018.

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**  
**PROFESSIONAL LEGAL SERVICES CONTRACTS : TAX ASSESSMENT CHALLENGES**

**PURPOSE OF REQUEST**

The Town of Amherst (Town) is requesting proposals (RFP) from qualified individuals and firms to provide legal services for Real Property Tax Law Article 7 proceedings (tax certiorari proceedings) and related matters. Using this RFP, the Town intends to establish a pool of attorneys who will be available to provide legal services as needed during the contract term. One or more individual/firms may be selected to provide services. If selected, a retainer agreement will be requested at a compensation rate agreed upon.

**PERIOD OF SERVICES**

From retention through December 31, 2020.

**SCOPE OF SERVICES**

It is the intent of the Town to solicit a statement of qualifications and experience from individuals and firms who have expertise in the provision of professional services as described below. Respondents must demonstrate that they will have the continuing capabilities to perform these services.

The Town Attorney for the Town seeking litigation and defense counsel services as it is frequently called upon to provide outside counsel for defense and representation in various tax certiorari and tax assessment proceedings. The subject matter of such litigation includes all aspects of said proceedings. Counsel will have a close working relationship with the Town Attorney and Town Assessor.

Counsel may be called upon to attend meetings with the Town Board.

Counsel may also be called upon to provide other types of legal services of a specialized nature relating to tax certiorari and/or matters relating to the assessment of properties and exemptions from taxation. This may include legal services relating to the establishment and/or extension of PILOTs.

**PROFESSIONAL INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS**

**QUALIFICATIONS STATEMENT**

A. Respondent shall submit a description of its overall experience in providing the type of services sought. At a minimum, the following information on past experience should be included as appropriate:

1. Description and scope of work by Respondent.
2. Name, address and contact information of references.

3. Explanation of perceived relevance of the experience to the services requested.
- B. Names and resumes of attorneys who will be assigned to provide legal services to the Town if the Town awards a contract to Respondent.
- C. A narrative statement of the Respondent's understanding of the Town's needs and goals.
- D. List all immediate relatives of Principal(s) of Respondent who are Town employees or elected officials of the Town. For purposes of the above, "immediate relative" means a spouse, parent, stepparent, brother, sister, child, stepchild, direct-line aunt or uncle, grandparent, grandchild, and in-laws.
- E. Limits of malpractice insurance coverage with certification that the same will be maintained to the extent necessitated by the Town.
- F. A listing of all other engagements where services of the types being proposed were provided in the past five (5) years. This should include other municipal governments, and other taxing authorities. Contact information for the recipients of the similar services must be provided. The Town may obtain references from any of the parties listed.
- G. Respondents must demonstrate a proven record of cases tried before the Federal and State Courts in the NYS Supreme Court Eighth Judicial District.
- H. The number of years Respondent has been in business under the present name.
- I. The number of years Respondent has been under the current management.
- J. Any judgments within the last three (3) years in which Respondent has been adjudicated liable for professional malpractice. If any exist, please explain.
- K. Whether the Respondent is now or has been involved in any bankruptcy or reorganization proceedings in the last ten (10) years. If yes, please explain.
- L. Confirmation of appropriate federal and state licenses.
- M. Respondents must list all cases where they represented the Town or in which they sued the Town or in which they represented a client that sued the Town, or where they have represented a client before any agency of the Town of Amherst within the last five (5) years.

**\*Note : Consents allowable under Rule 1.7 of the Code of the Town of Professional Responsibility may only be considered on a matter by matter basis by the Town Board.**

- N. Proposed Billing Rate Structure, including, but not limited to, hourly rates and alternative fee arrangements.
- O. Results obtained for the Town of Amherst, or other municipality/governmental entity, in the past three (3) years in providing legal service of the type requested.

## **CONDITIONS**

Upon submission of a Qualification Statement in response to this RFP, the Respondent acknowledges and consents to the following conditions relative to the submission and review and consideration of its Qualification Statement:

- This RFP does not commit the Town to issue a contract.
- All costs incurred by the Respondent in connection with responding to this RFP shall be borne solely by the Respondent.
- The Town reserves the right (in its sole judgment) to reject any Respondent that submits incomplete responses to this RFP, or a Qualification Statement that is not responsive to the requirements of this RFP.
- The Town reserves the right, without prior notice, to supplement, amend, or otherwise modify this RFP, or otherwise request additional information.
- All responses will be treated as confidential, unless otherwise required by law.
- The Town may request Respondents to send representatives to the Town for interviews.
- Neither the Town, nor its officers, officials or employees shall be liable for any claims or damages resulting from the solicitation or preparation of the Qualification Statement, nor will there be any reimbursement to Respondents for the cost of preparing and submitting a Qualification Statement or for participating in this procurement process.

The Town reserves, holds and may exercise, at its sole discretion, the following rights and options with regard to this RFP and the procurement process in accordance with the provisions of applicable law:

- To determine that any Qualification Statement received complies or fails to comply with the terms of this RFP.
- To supplement, amend or otherwise modify the RFP through issuance of addenda to all prospective Respondents who have received a copy of this RFP.
- To waive any technical non-conformance with the terms of this RFP.
- To change or alter the schedule for any events called for in this RFP upon the issuance of notice to all prospective Respondents who have received a copy of this RFP.
- To conduct investigations of any or all of the Respondents, as the Town deems necessary or convenient, to clarify the information provided as part of the Qualification Statement and to request additional information to support the information included in any Qualification Statement.
- To suspend or terminate the procurement process. If terminated, the Town may determine to commence a new procurement process or exercise any other rights provided under applicable law without any obligation to the Respondents.
- The Town shall be under no obligation to complete all or any portion of the procurement process described in this RFQ.

## **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

In selecting the proposer(s) with whom to commence contract negotiations, and in ultimately awarding this RFP, the Town will choose the proposal(s) from the responsible proposer(s) that is/are advantageous to the Town, and otherwise in accordance with the Town's procurement policy.

In order to determine what proposal(s) is/are most advantageous, the Town will evaluate all proposals on the basis on the criteria specified below. These criteria are not necessarily listed in order of importance. The Town reserves the right to weigh its evaluation criteria in any manner it deems appropriate. While price will be a factor in consideration of the proposals, it is not the sole criterion.

The criteria for evaluation is as follows:

- 1.) Proposer's demonstrated ability to provide the solicited legal services.
- 2.) Evaluation of the professional qualifications, background and resume(s) of the individual(s) proposed to be involved in providing the solicited legal services.
- 3.) Proposer's experience performing the legal services solicited.

- 4.) Evaluation of the proposer's fee proposal. It should be noted that fees are not the only consideration, but it is an important one. The fee structure shall remain in effect through December 31, 2020.
- 5.) A determination that the proposer has submitted a complete and responsive proposal as required by this RFP.
- 6.) An evaluation of the proposer's projected approach and plans to meet the requirements of this RFP.

### **SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

This RFP may be responded to in one of two ways:

1. Please submit one (1) original and nine (9) copies of the RFP on white 8.5" x 11" paper no later 4:00 p.m. on May 23, 2018 to:

**Stanley J. Sliwa, Esq., Town Attorney**  
Town of Amherst  
5583 Main Street  
Williamsville, New York 14221

Each proposal package must be delivered in a sealed envelope that is clearly marked: **LEGAL SERVICE PROPOSAL - TAX CERTIORARI/ASSESSMENT MATTERS**

2. Please submit one (1) PDF of your response via email to [townattorney@amherst.ny.us](mailto:townattorney@amherst.ny.us) with the subject line clearly marked: **LEGAL SERVICE PROPOSAL - TAX CERTIORARI/ASSESSMENT MATTERS**

Once delivered, proposals will be secured unopened so long as the envelope is marked as described above. Telephone and facsimile proposals will not be accepted.

Each proposer's proposal must be received by the Town by the stated due date. The Town is not responsible for any internal or external delivery delays that may cause the proposer's package to arrive beyond the deadline. To be considered, a proposal package **MUST** arrive in the place specified herein and be time-stamped prior to the deadline.