

TOWN OF MADISON

Request for Proposals

Municipal Legal Services

RFP issued	09/18/2026
Proposal deadline	10/05/2026
Submission address	Town Manager, Town of Madison 26 Weston Avenue Madison, Maine 04950
Envelope label	Municipal Legal Services RFP - Do Not Open

The Town seeks responsive, practical and cost-effective legal counsel with substantial Maine municipal law experience.

1 Invitation and Purpose

The Town of Madison, Maine invites proposals from qualified individual attorneys and law firms to provide municipal legal services on a contractual basis. Counsel will advise the Select Board, Town Manager, Town departments, and municipal boards, committees and commissions when authorized by the Town Manager, and will represent the Town when requested.

The Town intends to select counsel that can provide prompt, practical and efficient advice across the range of municipal matters described in this RFP. The Town may award one contract for comprehensive services or may engage more than one attorney or firm when specialized expertise, conflicts or service needs make that approach advantageous.

2 Municipal Background

Madison is a Town Meeting, Select Board and Town Manager municipality in Somerset County. The Town provides a broad range of local services and requires counsel who understands Maine municipal government, public-sector operations, open government requirements, land use, employment, taxation, contracts and litigation prevention.

The successful proposer will work primarily through the Town Manager or the Town Manager's designee. No department, board, committee, commission, employee or official may authorize billable legal work unless the Town Manager has approved the request, except when the Select Board expressly directs otherwise.

3 Anticipated Contract

- Contract start: as soon as practicable following selection and execution of an agreement.
- Initial term: negotiable, with renewal subject to mutual agreement and available appropriation.
- The Town may negotiate scope, staffing, rates and contract terms before award.
- Either party may terminate the agreement, with or without cause, upon fourteen days' written notice, subject to orderly transition of active matters and professional obligations.
- The proposal, this RFP and negotiated terms may be incorporated into the final agreement.

4 Scope of Services

The selected counsel may be asked to provide the services below. The list is representative, not exhaustive. Appendix A requires proposers to identify the areas they can cover and the principal attorney assigned to each area.

- General municipal governance, authority, procedure and legal opinions
- Maine Freedom of Access Act, public records, executive sessions and meeting requirements
- Drafting and review of ordinances, policies, warrants, contracts, agreements and procurement documents
- Labor and employment matters, including policies, hiring, discipline, leave, investigations, collective bargaining and separation

- Land use, planning, zoning, code enforcement, shoreland matters and administrative appeals
- Property taxation, assessment, abatements, liens, tax-acquired property and collection matters
- Real estate matters, including title review, deeds, easements, leases, acquisitions and dispositions
- Litigation, administrative proceedings, ordinance enforcement and coordination with insurers
- Public works, roads, utilities, environmental compliance, solid waste and natural resources
- Police, fire, emergency management, animal control and public safety matters
- Municipal finance, borrowing, grants, TIF matters and bond counsel coordination
- Election, town meeting, ethics, conflicts of interest and municipal officer questions
- Training and proactive risk-reduction guidance for officials, boards and employees
- Attendance at daytime or evening meetings, hearings, workshops and town meetings when requested
- Other municipal legal services authorized by the Town Manager or Select Board

5 Minimum Qualifications

1. The proposer and assigned attorneys must be in good standing and licensed to practice law in Maine. Attorneys assigned to litigation must be admitted before the courts and agencies necessary for that work, including the United States District Court for the District of Maine when applicable.
2. The lead attorney must demonstrate substantial experience advising Maine municipalities or comparable public entities. Specialized attorneys may be proposed for particular practice areas.
3. The proposer must have sufficient staffing, systems and availability to manage routine questions, urgent matters, active litigation and evening meetings.
4. The proposer must maintain professional liability insurance of at least \$1,000,000 per claim, or fully explain any proposed alternative coverage. Evidence of current coverage will be required before contract execution.
5. The proposer must be able to identify, disclose and manage actual or potential conflicts of interest in accordance with professional obligations and the Town's needs.

6 Proposal Requirements

To permit an orderly comparison, organize the proposal in the sequence below. Concise responses are encouraged. Appendices and resumes may be added as necessary.

Cover letter and authority. Identify the proposer, primary contact and person authorized to bind the firm. Confirm that the proposal remains valid for at least 90 days after the deadline.

Firm profile. Describe the firm's organization, office locations, years in practice, public-sector practice and capacity to serve Madison.

Assigned team. Identify the proposed lead attorney and every attorney or paralegal expected to perform material work. Include resumes, Maine bar status, roles, relevant experience and estimated percentage of practice devoted to municipal law.

Experience. Describe recent work for Maine municipalities or comparable public entities, including experience in the service areas listed in Appendix A.

Service approach. Explain how matters will be assigned, supervised, tracked and communicated; how continuity will be maintained; and how the firm will avoid unnecessary cost.

Responsiveness. State normal response standards for routine, time-sensitive and emergency requests, including evening and remote availability.

Proactive counsel. Describe training, updates, preventive review or other practices used to reduce disputes, claims and litigation.

Conflicts. Disclose current or reasonably foreseeable conflicts involving the Town, its boards, departments or material interests. Explain the firm's conflict-check and waiver process.

References. Provide at least three current or recent public-sector client references, including contact name, title, municipality or entity, telephone number and email.

Fees and expenses. Complete Appendix B. State all hourly rates, retainers, blended rates or alternative arrangements; rate guarantees; travel charges; administrative costs; research charges; and all other reimbursable expenses.

Insurance. Identify the professional liability carrier and limits. Include a certificate if available.

Appendices. Complete and sign Appendix A, Appendix B and the certification in Appendix C.

7 Service and Billing Expectations

- Advice should be practical, understandable and proportionate to the legal and financial risk.
- The Town expects prompt acknowledgment of inquiries and clear notice when a requested deadline cannot be met.
- Invoices may be submitted no more frequently than monthly and must identify the date, professional, time, matter, requesting department or official, work performed and expenses.
- Counsel must consult the Town Manager before materially exceeding an estimate, using unusually senior personnel, engaging experts or undertaking work outside the approved scope.
- Electronic documents must be provided in accessible, editable Microsoft Office-compatible formats when appropriate, with final signed or filed versions in PDF.

- Town records and work product must be organized for efficient transfer to the Town or successor counsel, subject to applicable law and professional obligations.

8 Submission Instructions

Submit one signed original in a sealed envelope clearly marked Municipal Legal Services RFP - Do Not Open. The Town may also requests a electronic PDF copy; sent to the email address below.

Email: townmanager@madisonmaine.com

Deliver proposals to:

Cheyenne Stevens, Town Manager
Town of Madison
26 Weston Avenue
Madison, Maine 04950

Proposal deadline: 10/05/2026

Late proposals may be rejected. Proposers are responsible for confirming timely delivery. Proposals sent only by facsimile will not be accepted.

9 Anticipated Schedule

Milestone	Anticipated date
RFP issued	09/18/2026
Proposals due	10/05/2026
Anticipated selection	10/12/2026
Contract begins	As soon as practicable

10 Reservation of Rights and General Conditions

1. The Town may accept or reject any or all proposals; waive informalities or minor irregularities; seek clarification; negotiate scope, price or terms; cancel or reissue this RFP; and make no award if doing so is in the Town's best interest.
2. The Town may select one or more attorneys or firms by service area and may retain other counsel when specialized expertise, workload, conflict or other circumstances warrant.
3. All costs of preparing, submitting and presenting a proposal are the proposer's responsibility.
4. A proposal is not a contract. No proposer acquires any right to an award or reimbursement, and no Town obligation arises until an agreement is fully executed by authorized parties.
5. Proposals become Town records upon receipt and may be subject to disclosure under Maine's Freedom of Access Act. A proposer should clearly identify information it believes is legally confidential and cite the basis for that claim. The Town cannot guarantee confidentiality merely because material is marked confidential.
6. The selected proposer may not assign or transfer the agreement or material responsibilities without prior written approval from the Town Manager.
7. The selected proposer must comply with applicable federal, state and local laws and professional standards, and must not discriminate in employment or service delivery on a basis prohibited by law.
8. The Town may require a background or conflict review, evidence of insurance and execution of a mutually acceptable professional services agreement before work begins.

Appendix A Legal Services Coverage

Mark each service area the proposer is willing and able to provide and identify the principal attorney responsible. Attach explanations where needed. The Town may award all or only selected service areas.

Offer	Service area	Principal attorney
☐	General municipal governance and legal opinions	
☐	Freedom of Access Act, records and meetings	
☐	Labor, employment and personnel	
☐	Collective bargaining and labor relations	
☐	Land use, planning, zoning and appeals	
☐	Code and ordinance enforcement	
☐	Property tax, abatements, liens and collections	
☐	Tax-acquired property	
☐	Real estate, deeds, titles, easements and leases	
☐	Contracts, procurement and construction	
☐	Roads, bridges, sidewalks and public works	
☐	Police and law enforcement	
☐	Fire, EMS and emergency management	
☐	Animal control	
☐	Environmental law and solid waste	
☐	Municipal finance, borrowing and TIF	
☐	Election and town meeting law	
☐	Insurance coverage and claims	
☐	Civil rights and discrimination claims	
☐	Litigation and administrative proceedings	
☐	Ordinance and policy drafting	
☐	Parks, recreation and public facilities	
☐	Training and preventive legal education	

Appendix B Proposal and Fee Form

Firm and Contact Information

Firm or attorney name	
Mailing address	
Physical address	
Primary contact and title	
Telephone	
Email	
Website	
Proposed lead Town Attorney	
Office distance and typical driving time to Madison Town Office	

Staffing and Availability

- Attach resumes for each proposed attorney and key professional.
- State normal office hours and availability for evening meetings.
- State expected acknowledgment and substantive response times for routine, urgent and emergency matters.
- Describe backup coverage when the lead attorney is unavailable.

Rates and Charges

Professional or classification	Role	Hourly rate	Rate guaranteed through

Retainer, blended rate, flat fee or alternative arrangement:

Travel time and mileage charges:

Legal research charges:

Paralegal, clerical, copying, postage and other support charges:

Court costs, experts and other third-party expenses:

Services provided without charge or at a reduced rate:

Other fees, assumptions or rate adjustments:

Professional Liability Insurance

Carrier	
Per-claim limit	
Aggregate limit	

Appendix C Proposer Certification

The undersigned certifies on behalf of the proposer that:

- The information in this proposal is complete and accurate to the best of the undersigned's knowledge.
- The proposal was prepared independently and without collusion with another proposer.
- The proposer has disclosed actual or reasonably foreseeable conflicts of interest known at the time of submission.
- The proposer can provide the offered services and will maintain required licenses and insurance throughout the contract term.
- The proposer has reviewed this RFP and agrees that the proposal may be relied upon during contract negotiations.
- The person signing below is authorized to submit the proposal and bind the proposer to its contents for at least 90 days after the submission deadline.

Firm or attorney name: _____

Authorized representative: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____