Introduction

The City of Hazleton operates pursuant to the Third-Class City Code, Optional Plan, Executive (Mayor) Council Plan B, under the Home Rule Charter and Optional Plans Law. The City currently employs a Solicitor who acts as general legal counsel for the entire City government structure. However, due to the nature and structure of the City’s form of government, the potential for conflicts of interest involving the Solicitor has necessitated the need for outside counsel to provide Conflict Counsel services. The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to obtain proposals from qualified law firms to provide Conflict Counsel Solicitor legal services for the City of Hazleton. The Conflict Solicitor should have substantial experience in the area of general municipal law, including experience with the Third-Class City Code and Optional Plan Law.

The Scope of Services of the Solicitor includes but is not limited to:

1. Knowledge and familiarity with Pennsylvania Third Class City Code and Optional Plans Law
2. Review of Policies and Procedures;
3. Contracts and procurement;
4. Familiarity with Municipal Planning Code (MPC);
5. Personnel and labor relations;
6. Other legal matters including interpretation and interplay of municipal laws, Hazleton City Code, Robert’s Rules of Order, and familiarity with the Public Official and Employee Ethics Act;
7. Attendance at monthly meetings of the City Council as needed.
**Specific Response Requirements**

All proposals must be submitted in accordance with the instructions detailed below. Responses should address the following requests for information or questions.

1. **Letter of Transmittal**

Each proposal should be accompanied by a letter of transmittal which summarizes the key points of the proposal and which is signed by an authorized officer.

2. **Firm Experience and Qualifications**

   A. Provide an overview of the firm and its qualifications. Include the location of your firm’s primary office, as well as any other offices in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or other states.

   B. Describe your firm’s relevant municipal practice for the past five (5) years.

   C. Submit evidence of professional liability insurance coverage.

   D. Submit three (3) references for different municipalities/municipal authorities of like size with names and direct line telephone numbers.

3. **Legal Services Team**

   A. Provide summaries of experience for each individual who would be assigned to represent the City of Hazleton. Then describe the specific roles that each attorney would be expected to play with respect to the City and identify the lead or senior attorney.

   B. Provide detailed resumes for each of the attorneys summarized above.

4. **Conflicts of Interest**

   Describe any material financial relationships that you or your firm or any employee has with any individual or organization that may create a conflict of interest in representing the City. Second, describe any family relationship that any employee of your firm has with any public servant that
may create a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest in representing the City. Third, describe any other matter that your firm believes may create a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest in representing the City and the manner in which such conflicts described in this paragraph will be resolved.

5. Fee Proposals

It is requested that you provide an hourly fee proposal for lead attorney, associates and staff as applicable. This fee proposal should clearly delineate reimbursable expenses as well as overhead charges. Rate must also include what increment of time is billable. Advise if a retainer is required. If so, the amount of said retainer. Indicate whether the firm will hold the fee proposal for one, two, or three years.

6. Evaluation Criteria and Selection Process

The City of Hazleton reserves the right to:

a) Select a proposal in its entirety or some portion(s) thereof;

b) Reject any and all proposals, in whole or in part;

c) Waive irregularities;

d) Request oral presentations and/or individual interviews from those individuals or firms determined to be in a competitive range;

e) Make the final selection using criteria judged to be the maximum benefit to the City as a whole.

7. Proposal Submission

Six (6) copies of the Submission must be received by Tuesday, March 31, 2020 at 10:00 A.M. prevailing time at the City Clerk’s Office. Submissions not received by the aforementioned date and time will be returned unopened. The Submission package must be
clearly labeled with “City Conflict Solicitor Services RFP”. Submission should be mailed or hand delivered to: Eileen Matenkoski, City Clerk, City of Hazleton, 40 N. Church Street, Hazleton, PA 18201.

**Selection Timetable**

Selection of the successful candidate will be based on proposals submitted and in-person interviews of a final set of candidates as determined by the Council of the City of Hazleton.