Bauman Associates Ltd.

Certified Public Accountants & Advisors

City of Columbus

Proposal for Audit Services 2026-2030

June 1st, 2026

Contact

Joe Harrison, CPA

Principal

joeharrison@baumancpa.com

4168 London Rd.
Eau Claire, WI 54701
715-834-2001
Baumancpa.com

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June 1, 2026

City of Columbus
ATTN: Kendra Riddle, Finance Director
105 N. Dickason Boulevard
Columbus, WI 53925

SUBJECT: Transmittal Letter

Dear Ms. Riddle:

On behalf of Bauman Associates, Ltd., I am pleased to present you with this summary letter of transmittal and the following proposal for audit services. We appreciate the opportunity to participate in your selection process as you seek a firm to conduct the annual audit for the City of Columbus.

Based on our more than 75 years of experience performing quality audits for government entities including municipalities throughout Wisconsin, we are confident our services would fulfill your requirements. The audit team led by Joe Harrison and Eric Davidson possesses extensive municipal and government accounting/audit expertise and we would look forward to applying these skills to work with the City of Columbus. Joe and Eric will be available for interviews regarding the proposal.

Following is our understanding of the engagement:

- The scope of this proposal is for the years ending December 31, 2026 – 2030 (includes pricing for optional four years as requested in the RFP). Fees are stated in the cost proposal section of our proposal and are broken out as requested in the request for proposal.
- We will provide the services as described in the request for proposal under the "Scope of Services" section. These audits are to be performed in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and if applicable, the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Governmental Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller of the United States.
- Timing for all audit interim prep work, planning, final field work, exit conferences, reporting and presentations will be conducted as per the dates specified in the request for proposal or other mutually agreeable times/dates as applicable.

This proposal is a firm and irrevocable offer for ninety days from the date of this document.

If you should need any more information regarding our proposal, please call me at 715-833-2638. Thank you.

Sincerely,
BAUMAN ASSOCIATES, LTD.

By: Joe Harrison

Joe Harrison, CPA

Certification of Independence

Certification of Independence

The firm certifies that all principals and staff members assigned to the engagement are free from impairments to independence with respect to the City of Columbus as defined by generally accepted auditing standards and the U.S. General Accounting Office's *Government Auditing Standards.* The firm will commit to maintaining an independent attitude and appearance through the full term of the engagement.

Profile of the Firm

The Bauman Difference

For more than seventy-five years, our simple philosophy and our approach to the business of accounting is “Put the people before the numbers.” When Bauman Associates, Ltd. was founded, it was with the express intent of creating a different kind of accounting firm ... one that would stand out from the rest of the pack. The firm strives to provide timely service at a reasonable cost to the client. That thinking remains firmly rooted at Bauman Associates today.

We understand the unique challenges that municipalities face in their day-to-day activities. We respond to our clients in a timely manner and provide new ideas in ways the municipality can lower their audit and accounting fees. Discover a uniquely different kind of accounting firm.

Type of Organization, Services provided, Size of Firm and Other Information
Bauman Associates, Ltd. is a regional full-service public accounting firm offering audit and accounting, tax and advisory services to our clients since 1947. We have been performing annual audits of local governments since that time in Wisconsin. We have three locations; Eau Claire, Hudson, and Green Bay, Wisconsin. More information about our firm and the full range of services provided can be obtained by viewing our website at www.baumancpa.com. We anticipate utilizing staff from both the Eau Claire and Green Bay offices in completing the work outlined in the scope of services.

Our firm has a total of approximately 50 employees including 7 principal/CPAs, 17 other CPAs, 18 professionals, and 8 administrative/support employees.

Our firm’s size is one of our greatest strengths. As a locally rooted firm, we offer the perfect balance between personal service and deep expertise. Unlike larger regional firms, we maintain close relationships with our clients, ensuring responsive, hands-on support tailored to their unique needs. At the same time, our breadth of experience and technical capabilities surpass those of smaller firms, allowing us to navigate complex financial and regulatory requirements with confidence. Our team is dedicated to providing both proactive advice—anticipating challenges before they arise and responding swiftly to emerging issues. We take a collaborative approach, working alongside our clients to enhance financial integrity, improve processes, and ensure compliance, all while fostering a partnership built on trust and accessibility.

Profile of the Firm

Name, phone number and e-mail addresses of the primary contacts for this proposal

Joe Harrison, CPA
Signing Principal
joeharrison@baumancpa.com
715-834-2001
Joe will serve as the signing principal on the audit. He has over 12 years of experience including extensive experience in planning and performing audits in various industries, including our firm's local government client base. Joe has taken numerous continuing professional education seminars on topics such as Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) standards and updates, U.S generally accepted auditing standards issued by the AICPA and *Government Auditing Standards.*

Education & Licenses
Bachelor's Degree in Accounting, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
CPA Licensure: Wisconsin
Professional Memberships
Member – American Institute of Certified Public Accountants
Member –Wisconsin Institute of Certified Public Accountants

Eric Davidson, CPA
Principal and in-charge
ericdavidson@baumancpa.com
715-834-2001
Eric has been with the firm for over 30 years and has extensive industry experience in public accounting working with governmental audit clients for those 30 years. Eric has attended numerous seminars on topics such as Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) standards and updates, U.S generally accepted auditing standards issued by the AICPA and *Government Auditing Standards*. Eric has also presented at the League of Wisconsin Municipalities' fall conference.

Education & Licenses
Bachelor's Degree in Accounting, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
CPA Licensure: Wisconsin
Professional Memberships
Member – American Institute of Certified Public Accountants
Member –Wisconsin Institute of Certified Public Accountant
Designated audit quality partner – AICPA's Government Audit Quality Center
Associate Member –Government Finance Officers Association

Profile of the Firm

Name, phone number and e-mail addresses of the primary contacts for this proposal

Karly Rubenzer
Senior Auditor
karlyrubenzer@baumancpa.com
715-834-2001
Karly has been with the firm for over 6 years and has devoted her time and experience in public accounting working with governmental audit clients. She has attended numerous seminars on topics such as Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) standards and updates, U.S generally accepted auditing standards issued by the AICPA and *Government Auditing Standards*.

Education & Licenses
Bachelor's Degree in Accounting and Finance, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

Profile of the Firm

Quality Control Procedures/internal review process

For the City's audit, our quality control procedures will function to ensure consistent delivery of high-quality services and reliable reporting. The engagement team will be staffed with professionals experienced in municipal accounting and government auditing standards (GAAS/Yellow Book). The engagement principal will oversee all phases of the audit, ensuring proper planning, supervision, and risk assessment. All significant audit areas, including compliance testing and financial reporting, will undergo detailed manager and principal review, followed by an independent review by a principal having no involvement in the engagement prior to report issuance. This multi-layered review process—supported by standardized firm checklists, internal consultation protocols, and post-engagement evaluations—provides assurance that the City's audit will be performed with accuracy, objectivity, and in compliance with professional standards. These steps are outlined in our firm's quality control document.

As a further commitment to providing quality audits to our clients and to fulfill our requirement for membership in the AICPA, Bauman Associates, Ltd. undergoes a peer review once every three years. Our most recent peer review report shows a rating of pass with no letter of comments for the year ended August 31, 2023.

A rating of "pass" is the best possible report rating. This report and the acceptance letter from the Peer Review Alliance Committee (administrating body for the WICPA) are also made available publicly on the AICPA website in the following link (we are firm #900010003873):

https://peerreview.aicpa.org/public_file_search.html

Regulatory Monitoring and Reporting
Our governmental audit team receives e-mail updates from the Wisconsin Department of Revenue ("WIDOR") relative to finance-related legislation and reporting in addition to reviewing The Municipality (monthly publication issued by the League of Wisconsin Municipalities). Through our affiliation with the League of Wisconsin Municipalities and Government Finance Officers Association, our team is aware of the resources available on the WIDOR website as well as drawing on our experience serving governmental audit clients in Wisconsin.

We have extensive experience working with municipal water utilities and are familiar with the reporting required by the PSC in annual reporting.

References from WI municipal government clients (specific municipal audit experience in Wisconsin)
Please see Appendix A for references.

Profile of the Firm

Bauman Associates, Ltd. is not aware of any judgments, pending or expected litigation, or other real or potential financial reversals that might materially affect the viability or stability of the firm.

Municipality Experience

Let's face it, municipalities are unique. It's critical that your accounting firm have a deep technical knowledge of the unique accounting requirements for local governments such as applicable state statutes, WI DOR and PSC rules.

Our governmental audit staff consists of a team of well-trained, highly qualified professionals all with the appropriate professional education credentials required to perform engagements of this type. We attend the League of Wisconsin Municipalities Annual Conference to receive updates on state-specific issues that impact Wisconsin Municipalities.

- American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA)
- Wisconsin Institute of Certified Public Accountants (WICPA)
- Governmental Audit Quality Center
- League of Wisconsin Municipalities – Associate Member
- Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) – Associate Member

Value-Added Services

For over 75 years, Bauman Associates has specialized in working with municipalities. We provide municipalities with comprehensive consulting and assistance to help with a wide variety of operational, audit and accounting needs, including:

- Single audit
- WEDC attestations
- Depreciation/capital assets updates
- Bookkeeping and payroll
- Budgeting/planning
- Forecasts/projections
- Fund accounting
- Internal controls
- Form C reports
- PSC reports
- Assistance with cash reconciliations
- CIP planning
- Rate case assistance
- Reporting (internal and external)
- GASB standards implementation
- Staff training
- Strategic efficiencies planning
- TID reporting, planning, and projections
- Year-end accounting
- Outsourced comptroller services

Outline of Work Plan

PHASE 1 – PLANNING & PREPARATION (OCTOBER – DECEMBER)

During this phase, the audit team meets with management to understand organizational changes, discuss upcoming accounting and reporting considerations, establish communication protocols, and develop a detailed audit timeline. Responsibilities, deadlines, and required schedules are identified early so management can prepare for year-end with a clear roadmap and minimal surprises.

Kickoff Meeting

- Confirm audit timeline and reporting deadlines
- Discuss changes in operations, personnel, grants, debt, capital projects, and IT systems
- Review prior audit findings and recommendations
- Establish key contacts and responsibilities
- Identify potential accounting and reporting issues early
- Discuss new GASB standards and implications for the audit

Deliverables

- Detailed Prepared By Client (PBC) list
- Audit timeline with milestone dates
- Assigned engagement team structure
- Communication protocol and status meeting schedule

Outcome

- Management enters year-end with a clear roadmap and no surprises.

PHASE 2 – INTERIM AUDIT PROCEDURES (JANUARY – FEBRUARY)

The audit team performs interim testing of internal controls, significant transaction cycles, compliance requirements, and other risk-based procedures. By completing these procedures early, potential issues can be identified and addressed before year-end, reducing the amount of work required during final fieldwork and minimizing disruption to municipal staff.

Outline of Work Plan

PHASE 2 – INTERIM AUDIT PROCEDURES (JANUARY – FEBRUARY) (CONTINUED)

The audit team performs interim testing of internal controls, significant transaction cycles, compliance requirements, and other risk-based procedures. By completing these procedures early, potential issues can be identified and addressed before year-end, reducing the amount of work required during final fieldwork and minimizing disruption to municipal staff.

Interim Fieldwork

- Internal control walkthroughs
- Risk assessment procedures
- Testing of major transaction cycles
- IT and cybersecurity inquiries
- Fraud risk discussions

Benefits

- Reduces year-end disruption
- Identifies issues before financial statements are drafted
- Allows audit team to focus on year-end balances during final fieldwork

Status Meeting

Conduct a formal progress meeting with management to discuss open items, potential accounting issues, GASB implementation requirements, and year-end closing progress.

PHASE 3 – YEAR-END CLOSE SUPPORT (AS NEEDED) (JANUARY-MARCH)

Throughout the closing process, the audit team maintains regular communication with management to address accounting questions, review emerging issues, and monitor progress toward completion of year-end schedules. Frequent status updates help ensure all required information is prepared and available according to the agreed-upon timeline.

Outline of Work Plan

PHASE 3 – YEAR-END CLOSE SUPPORT (AS NEEDED) (JANUARY-MARCH) (CONTINUED)

Ongoing Communication

Our team remains available throughout the closing process to assist management with:

- GASB reporting questions
- Tax roll reconcilation
- Capital asset reporting
- Debt and lease accounting

Progress Monitoring

Weekly or biweekly check-ins until the trial balance is finalized.

Milestone

Final trial balance and supporting schedules received by agreed-upon March deadline.

PHASE 4 – FINAL FIELDWORK (THREE DAYS SCHEDULED IN MARCH-EARLY APRIL)

The audit team performs detailed testing of year-end balances, transactions, estimates, grants, debt, capital assets, and other significant audit areas. To maximize efficiency while maintaining strong communication and client service, final fieldwork is conducted using a **hybrid approach that combines both on-site and virtual audit team members**. Key engagement personnel will be present on-site to facilitate collaboration with management, address questions in real time, and efficiently resolve open items, while additional team members work remotely to perform testing. This approach allows us to leverage the full resources of our firm while minimizing disruption to municipal staff and maintaining project momentum.

Throughout fieldwork, open items are tracked and communicated regularly to facilitate prompt resolution. Regular status updates and ongoing communication ensure that any issues are identified and addressed immediately, preventing delays later in the engagement. The goal is to complete fieldwork efficiently, resolve significant matters timely, and position the engagement for financial statement issuance by May.

Outline of Work Plan

PHASE 4 – FINAL FIELDWORK (THREE DAYS SCHEDULED IN MARCH-EARLY APRIL) (CONTINUED)

On-Site/Remote Fieldwork

- Substantive testing
- Analytical procedures
- Capital asset testing
- Long-term debt testing
- Cash and investment testing
- Journal entry review
- Surprise audit procedures (required by auditing standards).

Daily Communication

- Open-item tracking log
- Daily status updates during fieldwork

Goal
Complete fieldwork with minimal follow-up requests and no surprises.

PHASE 5 – FINANCIAL STATEMENT PREPARATION & REVIEW (APRIL)

Following completion of fieldwork, the audit team drafts the financial statements, note disclosures, and supplementary information, and required compliance reports. Multiple levels of internal quality review are performed to ensure compliance with governmental accounting standards, auditing standards, and regulatory requirements before providing drafts to management for review.

Draft Financial Statements
Prepare:

- Basic financial statements
- Notes to financial statements
- Required supplementary information

Outline of Work Plan

PHASE 5 – FINANCIAL STATEMENT PREPARATION & REVIEW (APRIL) (CONTINUED)

Internal Quality Control

- Principal review
- Independent quality review
- GASB disclosure review
- Compliance review

Management Review Draft

Provide draft reports sufficiently in advance for management review and discussion.

PHASE 6 – FINALIZATION & GOVERNANCE COMMUNICATION (LATE APRIL-MAY)

The audit team meets with management to discuss audit results, recommendations, and any internal control observations. Final reports are presented to the governing body and issued upon completion of all required reviews. The objective is to provide stakeholders with timely, reliable financial information no later than May each year.

Exit Conference

Discuss:

- Audit results
- Internal control observations
- Operational recommendations
- Emerging accounting standards

Governance Communication

Present results to Common Council as requested.

Deliverables

- Independent Auditor's Report
- Management Letter
- Governance Communications Letter
- Form C
- PE 300 TID annual report

Target Completion

Final audit issuance no later than May 31 each year.

Outline of Work Plan

ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES

Our Commitment to Timely Delivery

- Dedicated engagement manager responsible for milestone tracking
- Written project schedule distributed before year-end
- Biweekly status updates throughout the engagement
- Formal open-items tracker shared with management
- Early identification and resolution of accounting issues
- Principal involvement from planning through report issuance
- Municipal audit specialists familiar with Wisconsin reporting requirements

Success Measure

Our goal is to establish a repeatable process that allows management, elected officials, and stakeholders to receive audited financial statements by May each year, providing timely information for decision-making, budgeting, debt compliance, and regulatory reporting.

Administrative Requirements

We use a collaborative audit software (Inflo) which allows us to compile a list of documents and schedules needed to complete the audit (a "to-do" list) and gather audit information from our clients electronically and securely. This software allows for printing of an audit list, for use internally by the City. This software allows the City to upload items specifically requested and mark the tasks complete as the information is provided. Both the City and our audit team can track the status of a task or request in real time up to the point of completion. The feedback we receive from clients is that they really like this and find it is efficient and keeps them organized on audit-related tasks.

Detailed Cost Proposal

Outlined below are our fees associated with the services Bauman Associates, Ltd. will provide to the City of Columbus. Our fees are based on the anticipated time required by the individuals assigned to your engagement, plus direct expenses. Our fees will not exceed the figures shown below based on the present status of the City of Columbus, and the auditing and accounting standards in place today and include annual board presentation, out-of-pocket mileage, meals and lodging expenses. Based on inquiry with City officials there is no single audit requirement expected in 2026. These fees don't include federal and state single audit services as a separate item. The fees in the table shown below reflect the specific items shown in the cost proposal section of the RFP.

	Year Ended December 31,				
		Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional
Description of service provided	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**2030**
Audit of all funds of the City and preparation of drafts of the financial statements and related notes to the financial statements.	$55,000	$56,650	$58,350	$60,100	$61,900
Department of Revenue Form C Report	$2,000	$2,060	$2,120	$2,180	$2,250
Form PE-300 TID Report (ALL TIDS)	$2,500	$2,580	$2,660	$2,740	$2,820
Total fees:	**$59,500**	**$61,290**	**$63,130**	**$65,020**	**$66,970**

Detailed costs proposals for hourly charges for additional work performed beyond the scope of this RFP:

The fees for the audit and specific services requested in the proposal shown above do not include services not specifically mentioned. Examples include utility rate case assistance, bookkeeping tasks, preparation of bank reconciliations, or nonroutine complex accounting and reporting transactions. Additional services, if requested, will be billed at the hourly rates after discussing the nature of the services with the appropriate official within the City and arriving at a mutually agreeable fee range.

Appendix A – References

David DeJongh, Administrator
City of Cornell
222 Main Street
Cornell, WI 54732
Phone: 715-239-3710
Services provided: audit, accounting assistance for electric utility, Form C and PSC report preparation

Dawn Redenius, Clerk-Treasurer
Village of Sharon
125 Plain St
Sharon, WI 53585
Phone: 262-736-4888
Services provided: audit, accounting assistance, Form C and PSC report preparation

Brittney Rindy, City Administrator
City of Monroe
1110 18th Avenue
Monroe, WI 53566
Phone: 608-329-2500
Services provided: comprehensive outsourced comptroller services, preparation of the Form C, budget preparation and preparing for annual audit

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