



CITY OF NOVI CITY COUNCIL DECEMBER 16, 2024

SUBJECT: Approval of a three-year contract, with the option of two one-year renewals, between the City of Novi and Shifman Fournier Attorneys at Law to provide legal services for Labor and Employment Law.

SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT: Human Resources

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

- Of nine (9) proposals received, Shifman Fournier was ranked highest by a staff review team
- Shifman Fournier has provided Employment and Labor Law services to the City for the last six (6) years and has been well-regarded by staff
- This existing relationship means that Shifman Fournier has knowledge of the City's Collective Bargaining Agreements and the City's Budget.
- Staff's recommendation was sent to the Consultant Review Committee (CRC), who recommended the contract be put before City Council for approval.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

City Council retains the services of attorneys for three specific areas: General Legal support, Prosecution, and Employment and Labor Law. Since January 1, 2018, the City has contracted with Shifman Law (now Shifman Fournier) for Employment and Labor law services. Their most recent contract, entered into back in 2022, expires on December 31, 2024. The services which are included in the scope of work under this contract include, but are not limited to:

- Employment Disputes
- Assistance with union contractual matters, including unfair labor practice complaints, and representation at grievance hearings
- Act 312 Binding Arbitration Hearings

The Department of Human Resources requested formal bids for these services and received nine (9) proposals. A review team consisting of Human Resources (HR) Director Tia Gronlund-Fox, Deputy HR Director Elise Marra, and Director of Public Safety Erick Zinser reviewed the proposals.

The criteria for these ratings were as follows:

1. Relevant experience
2. Relevant qualifications
3. Understanding city related issues and familiarity with the city
4. Unique resources
5. Professional reputation in employment and labor law.

The panel unanimously ranked Shifman Fournier with the highest rating for these services.

	Dickinson Wright	Foster Swift	Garan Lucow Miller	Giarmarco Mullins & Horton	Kerr Russell	McGraw Morris	Shifman Fournier	The Allen Law Group	The Kelly Firm	Total
Evaluator 1	430	380	465	470	135	870	930	395	425	4500
Evaluator 2	490	560	345	390	550	480	830	335	520	4500
Evaluator 3	430	390	450	580	50	850	960	340	450	4500
TOTAL	1350	1330	1260	1440	735	2200	2720	1070	1395	13500
RANK	4	6	7	3	9	2	1	8	5	

From the nine proposals, hourly rates ranged from \$160/hour to \$740/hour. Shifman Fournier currently charges \$175/hour and will hold that rate through 12/31/25. Effective 1/1/2026 through 12/31/2027 that hourly rate will increase to \$185/hour. As a point of reference, the City Attorney's hourly rate is \$160/hour.

City staff have been very pleased with the services provided by Shifman Fournier for the last six years, including responsiveness, ability to resolve matters, and extensive expertise in this area of the law.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approval of a three-year contract, with the option of two one-year renewals, between the City of Novi and Shifman Fournier Attorneys at Law to provide legal services for Labor and Employment Law.