

TOWN OF PALMER LAKE
2026 - REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
TOWN ATTORNEY



A Mountain Law Firm

February 5, 2026
Town of Palmer Lake
42 Valley Crescent
Palmer Lake, CO 80133

To Glen Smith and The Town of Palmer Lake Board of Trustees:

JVAM PLLC is pleased to submit this proposal in response to the Town of Palmer Lake’s Request for Proposals for Town Attorney. JVAM offers a deep bench of experienced municipal attorneys prepared to provide comprehensive legal services, including strategic counsel on complex matters and day-to-day advisory work arising from governance, personnel, land use, and related municipal issues.

JVAM proposes a dedicated team led by partner Kent Whitmer, with support from partners Katie Randall and Sean Lemieux, attorneys Cooper Gehle and Jessica Karikas, and legal assistant Catherine Trotter. This team is well positioned to deliver responsive, practical, and cost-effective legal support tailored to the needs of the Town of Palmer Lake. Each member would be used extensively, with Kent’s oversight. Each team member has unique talents that would be utilized to the benefit of the Town of Palmer Lake.

I bring over 37 years of Colorado legal experience and a broad practice encompassing municipal law, real estate, water, special districts, and civil litigation. My familiarity with Colorado’s statutory framework and my pragmatic approach to municipal problem-solving enable me to address the full range of issues typically confronting a town attorney.

I currently serve as Town Attorney for the Town of Fraser, Colorado, a statutory municipality, a role I have held since August 2021. In that capacity, I have provided comprehensive legal counsel to the Town, including representation in one of the most significant matters in Fraser’s recent history. The case involved litigation brought by the Town’s largest developer concerning approximately 110 acres of land. After five years of litigation, including a 13-day preliminary injunction hearing and a subsequent trial, I successfully defended the Town on all claims and secured an award of the town’s full costs and attorney fees, exceeding \$1.3 million. The matter received regional attention and was featured in [Sky-Hi News](#).

Beyond complex litigation, I routinely advise on the full spectrum of municipal legal matters, including public works and service contracting, personnel and employment issues, land use review, code enforcement, eminent domain, board and trustee representation, Colorado Open Records Act compliance, resolution drafting and review, and liquor licensing. This breadth of experience ensures continuity, sound judgment, and practical guidance in both routine operations and high-stakes matters.

In addition to my current service as town attorney, I represent multiple special districts, work that closely parallels the duties and responsibilities of municipal counsel. This experience further reinforces my familiarity with governance, statutory compliance, contracting, and public entity operations.

I also bring substantial business experience that informs my legal judgment. Early in my

career, I became a business owner in Grand County, where I developed a practical understanding of operations, finance, and risk management while expanding my legal practice in real estate law. During this period, I founded and operated a solo law practice focused exclusively on real estate matters.

In response to broader economic conditions during the Great Recession, I expanded my practice to include civil litigation and trial work, collections, business formation, and general business advisement. I have since owned and managed a successful business, built and led a successful law firm, which later absorbed three retiring firms to expand my experience to include HOA and private clients and water law, before merging with JVAM, where I now serve as an equity partner.

This combination of municipal, special district, litigation, and business experience provides me with a well-rounded and pragmatic perspective when advising public entity clients. My background allows me to quickly assess legal issues in their operational context and provide sound, efficient guidance grounded in real-world experience.

I am backed by a team of partner attorneys, associates, and paralegals with decades of experience that provide clients of JVAM with responsiveness and capabilities above and beyond the typical regional firm.

We understand the importance of fostering a collaborative environment to address shared complex issues that arise for the Town of Palmer Lake. Our approach emphasizes open communication and cooperation among all stakeholders, ensuring that solutions are both legally sound and practically effective.

We are confident in our ability to effectively represent the Town of Palmer Lake in all municipal matters. Our team's extensive experience and commitment to excellence make us well-suited to handling the complexities of your municipal, personnel, and land use matters.

Sincerely,



Kent Whitmer
Partner

About Kent's Team

Katie Randall is a partner at JVAM whose practice focuses on water rights and local government representation, serving special districts, water conservancy districts, and private property owners throughout Colorado's West Slope. She has substantial experience with Water Court adjudications, well permitting, and water rights due diligence in connection with real estate transactions. Her deep understanding of Colorado water law and regulatory processes allows her to provide effective, practical counsel in complex water rights matters.

Sean Lemieux is a partner at JVAM with more than 25 years of legal experience, serving clients across Grand County and Colorado's mountain communities. His practice encompasses complex family law, estate planning, and probate litigation, with extensive experience representing clients in both trial and appellate courts. Drawing on decades as a sole practitioner, Sean provides strategic, practical counsel grounded in sound judgment and effective advocacy.

Cooper Gehle is an associate attorney with experience supporting a range of legal matters following his admission to practice in Colorado. He earned his law degree, magna cum laude, from Michigan State University College of Law and brings a strong academic foundation and practical experience from prior legal roles in both private practice and legal services. His background and training enable him to provide thoughtful, detail-oriented support to clients across a variety of legal issues.

Jessica Karikas is an attorney at JVAM whose practice encompasses real estate and transactional matters, water rights, land use and development, business formation, and estate planning and probate. She brings a multidisciplinary background in environmental science and law, with experience in contract drafting, legal analysis, and litigation support. Her strong attention to detail and commitment to effective advocacy allow her to provide thoughtful, reliable counsel to clients across a range of complex legal matters.

Catherine Trotter is a Legal Assistant at JVAM with substantial experience supporting real estate, water, business, and local government matters. She brings over two decades of municipal planning leadership as former Town Planner for the Town of Fraser, with deep expertise in land use regulation, zoning, and governmental processes. Her combined background in legal operations and public sector planning provides JVAM clients with informed, reliable support in complex regulatory and transactional matters.

About JVAM

JVAM has office locations in Aspen, Basalt, Glenwood Springs, Buena Vista, Fraser Valley, Paonia, Salida, and Winter Park. We serve the Arkansas River Valley, the Roaring Fork Valley, and clients' needs and interests across Colorado.

Our lawyers are sophisticated, approachable, practical, and reasonable. Their experience across real estate, business, water rights, contracts, leases, litigation, and more areas of the law equips them to serve the broad and unique needs of people who live and do business in our mountain communities. Our attorneys are down-to-earth people who deliver work that is cost-effective and worth your investment.

Why JVAM?

JVAM hosts a capable team of attorneys, paralegals, and assistants well situated to meet the expectations and needs of the Town of Palmer Lake. We propose Kent Whitmer primarily support the Town of Palmer Lake with the support of our 19 other attorneys and 9 paralegals and legal assistants.

JVAM's attorneys are free to focus on the needs of their clients. By maintaining a well-trained team of assistants and administrators, our attorneys are unencumbered by the day-to-day demands of business management and solely focused on clients' priorities.

JVAM utilizes an experienced team of paralegals that bill at favorable rates to ensure that legal administrative steps such as filings, docketing, and general preparations, communications, and facilitations, are managed in the most cost-effective manner possible for clients. This allows our attorneys to focus on substantive work, communications, and collaboration with the greatest benefit to the clients we represent.

JVAM also maintains a team of dedicated financial professionals who ensure billing, payments, and any other financial logistics are handled in the most efficient, clear, and cost-effective manner possible.

Conflicts of Interest

Currently, we have determined no known conflicts of interest with existing or previous clients of JVAM PLLC.

Meeting Attendance

Attorneys representing the town would be willing to attend in-person or remote as decided by the town manager, the town trustees, and the attorney attending the meeting.

Terms & Fees for Service

JVAM invoices clients for services on an hourly basis, billed in 1/10th of an hour increments. Additionally, JVAM invoices clients for all expenses incurred on the client's behalf. Invoicing occurs monthly. For our municipal clients, we provide Net 60 terms. More details regarding terms of service, invoices, and other information may be found in the engagement agreement attached.

Rates

For the Town of Palmer Lake, we will provide special reduced hourly billing rates for legal fees.

	Standard Rate	Special Rate for Town of Palmer Lake
Kent Whitmer	\$450	\$350
Partners	\$425 – \$605	\$300 - \$350
Associates	\$250 – \$325	\$250
Paralegals	\$195	\$135

Expense Categories	Proposed Rates
Travel from Winter Park to Palmer Lake	\$500/round trip
Black & White printing in excess of 500 pages	\$0.25/page
Color printing in excess of 500 pages	\$0.10/page
Postage in excess of 20 mailers	\$0.75/mailer

Project Experience

Per the request of the proposal, please see a list of similar work experience with a comparable service scope for Kent.

1. **Grand County Title and Escrow Company, Inc.** – Grand County, CO
Owner & Manager
Provided legal and managerial oversight for complex title, real estate, and land use matters, developing extensive experience in property transactions and regulatory compliance.
2. **The Whitmer Law Firm, LLC** – Grand County, CO
Owner & Manager
Led a diverse legal practice with a focus on real estate, land use and development, water law, business formation, and civil litigation.
3. **The Whitmer Law Firm, LLC** – Grand County, CO
Principal Attorney
Expanded the firm’s practice to include representation of multiple governmental entities, serving as general counsel and providing comprehensive municipal legal services
4. **Additional Comparable Experience**
Town Attorney – The Town of Fraser
General Counsel – Middle Park Water Conservancy District, Granby Sanitation District, Grand County Water and Sanitation District, Winter Park Water and Sanitation District

Insurance Information & Limits

Per the request of the proposal, JVAM’s professional liability insurance provider is QBE, with limits of \$2,000,000 per claim and \$2,000,000 annual aggregate.

References for Kent Whitmer

Town of Fraser

Michael Brack – Town Manager

mbrack@town.fraser.co.us

Winter Park Water & Sanitation District

Kent Bossard – President

kentb@wpwsd.com

Grand County Water and Sanitation District

William Buff Borrás – Manager

wborras@gcws1.com

Granby Sanitation District

Tom Swift – Manager

tomswift@granbysanitation.com

Middle Park Water Conservancy District

Jack Buchheister – Board President

jack@westportalprop.com

Additional professional references are available upon request.

KENT WHITMER

Fraser, CO | kent@jvamlaw.com | 970-531-1126

BAR ADMISSIONS

Admitted to practice in: Wyoming (1989); Montana (1990); Colorado (1992)

EDUCATION

FORT LEWIS COLLEGE, Durango, CO
BA in Business Administration, 1984

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO, Boulder, CO
MBA and JD, 1989

EXPERIENCE

JVAM LAW, Fraser, CO

Equity partner, 2025 — Present

- Merged The Whitmer Law Firm with JVAM to acquire access to significant legal depth and support

THE WHITMER LAW FIRM LLC, Grand County, CO

Owner & Manager, 2016 — 2025

- Expanded practice to include government entity general counsel representations, including Town Attorney for The Town of Fraser, and General Counsel for Middle Park Water Conservancy District, Granby Sanitation District, Grand County Water and Sanitation District, Winter Park Water and Sanitation District
- Purchased retiring attorney Rich Newton’s law practice in 2016, creating exposure to representing HOA and private clients.
- Purchased retiring attorney Stan Cazier’s law practice in 2018, expanding practice areas to include water clients, water conservancy districts, water and sanitation districts, and district client representation
- Purchased retiring attorney Rod McGowan’s law practice, becoming Town Attorney for Fraser and general counsel for a sanitation district in Granby.

GRAND COUNTY TITLE AND ESCROW COMPANY INC, Grand County, CO

Owner & Manager, 1991 — 2015

- Extensive experience in title, real estate, and land use matters.

THE WHITMER LAW FIRM LLW, Grand County, CO

Owner & Manager, 1991 — 2015

- Practice areas in real estate, land use, development, water, business formation, and civil litigation.
- Expanded practice to civil litigation, trial work, collections, business formation, and advisement.

THRONE LAW FIRM, Sheridan, WY

Associate Attorney, 1989 — 1991

- General practice with an emphasis on oil and gas law, developing skills in real estate law and title examination, civil litigation, family law, and collections
- Diversified practice areas to assist the County Attorney with litigation matters on an ad hoc basis

SKILLS

- 37 years of diverse business and legal experience
- Ability to quickly assess a situation and determine the real issues at hand
- Common-sense approach to problem-solving