



WILLIAM S. COLE
wcole@axley.com
608.283.6766

August 25, 2026

Via Overnight Delivery

Ms. Ashley Oliphant
City Administrator
City of Richland Center
450 South Main Street
Richland Center, WI 53581

RE: City Attorney – Contracted Municipal Legal Services
RFP No. 2026-01

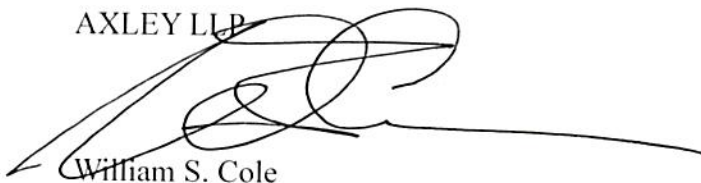
Dear Ms. Oliphant:

Thank you for the opportunity to present a proposal to provide legal services to the City of Richland Center. Enclosed please find a response to RFP questions, and a copy of our municipal services brochure describing the background and qualifications of myself and the members of the municipal practice group, and a representative listing of our municipal clientele.

Axley LLP is a full service law firm, comprised of more than 60 attorneys, with offices in Madison and Waukesha. We serve as general counsel to over 50 municipal entities throughout the State of Wisconsin, including several intergovernmental entities. We also serve many municipalities on specific legal matters. As such, we are fully versed in all aspects of municipal law.

Please feel free to contact me if I can provide any further information.

AXLEY LLP



William S. Cole

WSC:sbh
Enclosures



FIRM/ATTORNEY PROFILE, INCLUDING OFFICE LOCATION(S) AND THE INDIVIDUAL(S) WHO WOULD BE PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR CITY WORK.

We firmly believe the best way to provide cost-effective and timely municipal service is to combine the expertise of many different municipal attorneys of varying specialties, with the responsiveness of a single point of contact. By utilizing individuals with specific expertise to suit the issue, and specifically trained non-attorney municipal staff, I am confident we can provide service as cost effectively as our competitors, notwithstanding any variation in hourly rates.

To that end, William Cole would serve as the City Attorney and bear overall responsibility for all legal services to the City, with support from other of the firm's municipal attorneys, paralegals, and non-municipal specialists as appropriate for specific matters. In that way, the City would have a single point of contact but benefit from the resources of a large firm. I would be available by cell phone on a 24/7 basis. Other attorneys of the firm's municipal practice would also regularly perform work for the City as appropriate based on their specific expertise:

Michelle Martin
Kathryn Sawyer Gutenkunst
Danielle Tierney
Christopher Nelson

Lori Lubinsky
Robert Procter
Connor Mooney
Michael Van Kleunen

Detailed biographies for each of the above attorneys and myself are included in the attached municipal services brochure.

RELEVANT MUNICIPAL/PUBLIC-SECTOR EXPERIENCE AND REPRESENTATIVE CLIENTS.

Axley serves as general counsel to more than 50 municipal entities throughout the State of Wisconsin. This includes all range of entities – counties, cities, villages, towns, development authorities, library boards, plan commissions, boards of review, police and fire commissions, and entities created by intergovernmental agreement. Additionally, we serve as special counsel to numerous additional municipalities on an as needed or special occurrence basis.

As a firm we have over 60 attorneys. We have a team of attorneys, paralegals, and staff devoted to the municipal practice of law. We have practiced in the municipal field for over 60 years. As such, our municipal attorneys are advising municipal leaders and assisting them on a daily basis. This work includes, but is certainly not limited to the following examples:

Please refer to the attached municipal services brochure for a specific listing of municipal clientele and our public sector experience.

RESUMES OR BIOGRAPHIES OF ASSIGNED ATTORNEYS AND KEY STAFF.

Please refer to the attached municipal services brochure.

STATEMENT OF AVAILABILITY, RESPONSE-TIME COMMITMENTS, AND COVERAGE ARRANGEMENTS.

We are confident we will be able to exceed the response times requested in the request for proposals. As to matters which are urgent, principal city officials will have the cell phone number of myself and several of the other municipal attorneys. We are available on a 24/7 basis and will be able to respond as needed.

Myself, or one of the other municipal attorneys, will be able to attend all meetings for which the City requests attendance. We can appear in person or remotely, as requested by the City.

STATEMENT OF OFFICE LOCATION AND WILLINGNESS TO ATTEND IN-PERSON MEETINGS (RESPONSIVE TO SECTION 5).

Our offices are located in Madison and Waukesha. Attorney Cole works out of the Madison office. Significantly, he also maintains a residence outside of Plain, WI, and often works from there. As such, travel time can be minimized. We appreciate the concern for additional expense due to a non-local presence. We would encourage you to contact the city manager in Platteville, WI. We have represented the City of Platteville since 2017. We believe they will report to you the geographical distance has not been a problem.

Whenever any of the municipal attorneys are out of the office for an extended leave, backup individuals are assigned and available as needed. City officials will be given their names and points of contact prior to any such absence.

FEE PROPOSAL.

Services would be billed as follows to the nearest 1/10th of an hour by all attorneys:

General Municipal/Municipal Court Matters	\$287 per hour
Litigation Matters	\$387 per hour
TIF/Development/Other Matters	\$411 per hour

We are open to a flat-fee / retainer arrangement, but would need additional information in order to provide a specific amount.



Staff are billed at various rates depending on the person. Fees are revised annually at the beginning of each year. Itemized invoices are sent on a monthly basis and payment is requested within 30 days.

All out-of-pocket expenses would be charged at cost without administrative write-up and supported by invoices provided upon request. Travel expenses would be billed at the standard business mileage reimbursement rate set annually by the IRS. Our office is equipped with videoconferencing capabilities (Zoom, Teams, etc.) to allow for remote appearances at meetings as requested.

It is likely our hourly rates will not be the lowest of our competitors. However, I am confident we can fulfill the responsibilities to the City at a lower total cost. To that end, I would encourage you to request the monthly invoices for any of our communities (they are all obviously public record) and compare them to the monthly invoices of any of the other firms you are considering.

CONFLICT-OF-INTEREST DISCLOSURE.

The firm currently has no existing conflicts with the City. To the extent any conflict would arise, we would seek to obtain conflict waivers if appropriate. If we are unable to obtain a conflict waiver, we will secure substitute counsel as required by the code of ethics.

AT LEAST THREE (3) REFERENCES, PREFERABLY FROM WISCONSIN MUNICIPAL CLIENTS, WITH CONTACT INFORMATION.

I have listed the below references for communities I believe are pertinent to the City. However, I am proud to say I have a good working relationship with all of the public officials with whom I work. I would encourage you to contact the leadership of any municipality for whom we serve. I am confident any of which we represent will speak well of the service we provide.

Ms. Caz Muske
City Manager
City of Platteville
608-348-1821
citymanager@platteville.org

Mr. Neil Stechschulte
City Administrator
City of Monona
(608) 222-2525
neil@ci.monona.wi.us



Mr. Dean Grosskopf
Town Administrator
Town of Westport
(608) 849-4372
dgrosskopf@townofwestport.org

Ms. Tina Butteris
Village Administrator
Village of Windsor
(608) 888-0066
tina@windsorwi.gov

EVIDENCE OF WISCONSIN BAR ADMISSION AND PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY COVERAGE.

<u>Attorney</u>	<u>WI Bar #</u>
Bill Cole	1011623
Michelle Martin	1018136
Lori Lubinsky	1027575
Kathryn Sawyer Gutenkunst	1000329
Robert Procter	1034777
Danielle Tierney	1096371
Connor Mooney	1119779
Christopher Nelson	1113547
Michael Van Kleunen	1113958

The Firm's certificate of insurance is attached, documenting \$15 million in coverage.

ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION THE PROPOSER BELIEVES IS RELEVANT.

My philosophy in providing municipal services is simple -- the ability of myself, and all of the people associated with me, to support our families depends on our clients being satisfied with our work. Absent a catastrophe, all phone calls and emails will be returned or responded to within 24 hours, usually within a couple of hours. All tasks are assigned an internal deadline and responsible attorney. They are then tracked by my assistant and discussed with me each morning to ensure they are fulfilled within the City's timeline. I welcome, and will seek out, constructive criticism in an effort to constantly improve our service. I believe the best indication of my dedication to providing the best possible service is the fact that I still represent every municipality that has hired me as their municipal attorney in my entire 36 year career.