

State of Minnesota
County of Watonwan

RESOLUTION NO. 10.26.08

**RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE EDA SERVICES PROPOSAL AND
AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE THE AGREEMENT**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF
THE CITY OF ST. JAMES, MINNESOTA, as follows:**

Section 1: The City Council hereby approves the proposal for contracted economic development services with Rod Hamilton as an economic development advisor at a monthly compensation of \$2,500 through December 31, 2026. Any continuation of services beyond December 31, 2026, shall be subject to mutually agreed-upon terms between the City and Rod Hamilton.

Section 2: The City Manager is hereby authorized and directed to execute the agreement and any necessary documents on behalf of the City of St. James.

Adopted by the City Council this 6th day of October 2026.

Christopher Whitehead, Mayor

ATTEST:

Kristin Hurley, City Clerk-Treasurer

Proposal for Contract Economic Development Services

Prepared For	Rod Hamilton
Prepared By	City of St. James
Initial Term	Negotiable

Purpose

The City of St. James is interested in establishing a contractual relationship with Rod Hamilton to provide strategic economic development leadership for the St. James Economic Development Authority (EDA).

The City recognizes that successful economic development is fundamentally relationship-driven. This proposal is intentionally structured to utilize Rod's experience, relationships, knowledge of Greater Minnesota, and ability to connect people and resources while allowing City staff to provide the administrative support necessary to carry out that work.

The goal is not simply to fill a vacant position. It is an opportunity to reconsider how St. James approaches economic development and establish a model focused on relationships, opportunities, projects, and measurable community impact.

The Opportunity

St. James is at a point where economic development can be approached differently. Rather than focusing primarily on administration of programs, the City wants to focus its resources on creating opportunities, developing relationships, and pursuing projects that will have a lasting impact on the community.

The City believes this partnership provides an opportunity to combine Rod's experience and relationships with the City's resources and commitment to create meaningful, long-term results for St. James.

Proposed Role

Contract Economic Development Advisor

Rod would serve as the City's primary strategic economic development resource and would work directly with the City Manager, EDA Board, businesses, developers, property owners, regional partners, and state and federal resources.

The position would be structured as an independent contractual relationship rather than a traditional full-time City employee position.

Primary Areas of Focus

Business Development & Retention

Develop and maintain relationships with existing St. James businesses; identify opportunities for expansion and investment; assist businesses encountering barriers to growth; and connect businesses with appropriate financing, workforce, state, regional, and technical resources.

Business Recruitment

Identify and pursue businesses and developers that may be a good fit for St. James. Serve as a relationship-builder and primary point of contact for significant economic development prospects.

Housing Development

Assist the City in identifying and advancing opportunities for workforce housing, market-rate housing, redevelopment, and other housing initiatives necessary to support continued community and economic growth.

Development & Redevelopment

Work with the City Manager and EDA to identify strategic development and redevelopment opportunities, including underutilized properties, commercial areas, industrial development, downtown opportunities, and other catalytic projects.

Project Development

Help move projects from concept to reality by bringing together developers, property owners, financial institutions, government agencies, funding partners, and other necessary stakeholders.

State, Regional & Legislative Relationships

Leverage existing relationships and experience to connect St. James with resources and opportunities available through the State of Minnesota, regional development organizations, legislators, agencies, and other economic development partners.

Strategic Economic Development

Work with the City Manager and EDA Board to establish economic development priorities and identify projects capable of creating long-term impact for St. James.

Administrative Support

The City understands that Rod's highest value to St. James would be his experience, relationships, strategic thinking, and ability to advance projects - not routine administrative work.

Accordingly, the City would provide administrative support for the position. City staff would be responsible for routine paperwork and administrative functions, including meeting preparation and minutes, record retention, routine correspondence, processing documents, financial documentation, reporting, and other administrative tasks associated with EDA operations.

Rod would provide the substantive information and direction necessary when documentation is required for a project but would not be expected to perform routine clerical or administrative duties.

Work Arrangement

The City proposes a flexible, results-oriented arrangement. Rod would primarily work remotely and would not be expected to maintain regular office hours at St. James City Hall.

In-person attendance would be focused on situations where his presence adds value, including significant development meetings, meetings with businesses or developers, selected EDA meetings, community or regional meetings, and other important project discussions.

The City recognizes and respects that health and family come first. The arrangement would be intentionally structured to provide flexibility regarding when and where work is performed.

Rather than measuring the relationship by hours spent in an office, the City would evaluate its success based upon communication, relationships developed, opportunities pursued, projects advanced, and results achieved.

Working Relationship

Rod would work directly with the City Manager. The City Manager would remain responsible for overall City administration and would coordinate City staff resources necessary to support economic development activities.

The EDA Board would continue to establish policy, approve programs and financial commitments where required, and provide strategic direction.

- Rod develops relationships, identifies opportunities, connects resources, and helps move projects forward.
- City staff handles the administrative structure and documentation necessary to support those efforts.
- The City Manager provides organizational oversight, coordination, and connection to City Council and other City operations.

Initial Priorities

- Become familiar with existing St. James EDA projects, programs, properties, businesses, and financial resources.
- Meet with key employers, businesses, financial institutions, developers, community partners, and regional economic development organizations.
- Review current development opportunities and identify projects with the greatest potential for advancement.
- Assess existing EDA programs and identify opportunities for improvement or simplification.
- Identify potential housing, commercial, industrial, and redevelopment opportunities.
- Establish a short list of strategic economic development priorities.
- Present recommendations to the City Manager and EDA Board regarding where St. James should focus its economic development resources.

Communication

Because the position would operate with considerable independence and flexibility, communication will be important. Rod and the City Manager would establish a regular communication schedule appropriate to current projects and workload.

The City is not seeking extensive activity reports or unnecessary documentation. Updates should be concise and focused on:

- Active projects and prospects;
- Significant conversations or opportunities;
- Issues requiring City action;
- Upcoming decisions; and
- Assistance or resources needed from City staff or the EDA.

Initial Term and Future Relationship

The City proposes an initial agreement beginning upon execution and continuing through December 31, 2026. The remainder of 2026 will serve as an initial trial period, allowing both Rod and the City to evaluate the working relationship, scope of services, workload, administrative support structure, and overall effectiveness of the arrangement.

If the arrangement is mutually successful, the parties intend to negotiate a subsequent one-year agreement. Thereafter, the City envisions continuing the relationship through successive one-year agreements unless either party determines that the arrangement should conclude or be modified.

The formal professional services agreement would include reasonable provisions allowing either party to terminate the relationship upon written notice.

Proposed Compensation

For the initial term, the City proposes compensation of \$2,500 per month, prorated for any partial month at the beginning of the agreement.

Compensation would be structured as a monthly professional-services retainer rather than an hourly arrangement. The intent is to recognize that the value of this relationship is derived from Rod's experience, relationships, strategic involvement, accessibility, and ability to advance economic development opportunities rather than a prescribed number of hours worked.

The monthly retainer would encompass the economic development services described within this proposal. The City would provide the administrative support necessary for EDA operations and project implementation.

Prior to January 1, 2027, Rod and the City Manager would review the initial arrangement and negotiate compensation and terms for a subsequent one-year agreement.

What St. James Is Looking For

St. James is not looking simply for someone to administer an EDA. The City is looking for someone who understands rural Minnesota, knows how to bring people together, recognizes opportunities, understands how government and private development intersect, and can help turn ideas into projects.

The City wants its economic development efforts to create lasting value for the community. This partnership is intended to build a model centered on relationships, collaboration, problem-solving, and results.

Next Step

This proposal is intended to begin a conversation rather than prescribe every detail of the relationship. If the concept is of interest, the City Manager and Rod would meet to discuss the proposed scope, anticipated level of involvement, compensation, administrative support, and any modifications necessary to create an arrangement that works well for both Rod and the City of St. James.

Following mutual agreement on the framework, the terms would be incorporated into a formal professional services agreement for appropriate City review and approval.