

Request for Proposals (RFP)

Zoning Hearing Board Solicitor

City of Johnstown, Pennsylvania

1. Introduction

The City of Johnstown is soliciting proposals from qualified attorneys and law firms licensed to practice law in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to serve as Solicitor for the City of Johnstown Zoning Hearing Board.

The selected attorney or firm will provide independent legal counsel to the Zoning Hearing Board in accordance with the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, the City of Johnstown Zoning Ordinance, applicable federal and state laws, and relevant court decisions. The solicitor shall serve as legal advisor to the Zoning Hearing Board and represent the Board in matters arising from its official duties.

2. Issuing Agency

City of Johnstown
City Hall
401 Main Street
Johnstown, PA 15901

3. Term of Appointment

The appointment shall continue until such time as the member resigns, is removed, or the appointment otherwise expires or is terminated in accordance with applicable law. Continued service shall be subject to the discretion of the City and/or Zoning Hearing Board, applicable law, and the availability of appropriated funding.

4. Scope of Services

The Zoning Hearing Board Solicitor shall provide legal services including, but not limited to:

- Attending all regular, special, and continued meetings and hearings of the Zoning Hearing Board.
- Advising the Board regarding procedures, evidence, due process requirements, ethics, conflicts of interest, and compliance with the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.
- Preparing, reviewing, and approving legal notices, findings of fact, conclusions of law, written decisions, orders, and other legal documents.
- Conducting legal research and providing written or verbal legal opinions as requested.

- Assisting the Board with interpretation of zoning ordinances, applicable statutes, regulations, and case law.
- Advising the Board on hearing procedures and record preservation requirements.
- Representing the Board in appeals and litigation before the Court of Common Pleas and appellate courts, when authorized.
- Coordinating with the City's Zoning Officer, Planning Department, City Solicitor, and other municipal officials as necessary.
- Remaining available to provide legal advice between meetings and hearings.

These duties are consistent with those commonly required of Pennsylvania zoning hearing board solicitors.

5. Minimum Qualifications

Proposals will be considered only from attorneys or law firms that:

- Are licensed and in good standing to practice law in Pennsylvania.
- Have a minimum of five (5) years of experience in municipal, zoning, land use, or administrative law.
- Demonstrate substantial knowledge of:
 - Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code;
 - Pennsylvania Sunshine Act;
 - Pennsylvania Right-to-Know Law;
 - Local government law;
 - Zoning, subdivision, and land development matters.
- Have experience representing zoning hearing boards, planning commissions, municipalities, or similar public bodies.
- Maintain professional liability insurance.

6. Proposal Requirements

Proposals shall include the following information:

A. Firm Information

- Firm name and address.
- Primary contact person.
- Telephone number and email address.

B. Qualifications and Experience

- Description of the firm and practice areas.
- Resumes of attorneys who will provide services.
- Summary of municipal and zoning-related experience.
- Experience serving as solicitor to zoning hearing boards, planning commissions, or municipalities.

C. References

Provide at least three municipal references, including:

- Municipality name;
- Contact person;
- Title;
- Telephone number;
- Email address.

D. Fee Proposal

Provide a detailed fee schedule, including:

- Hourly rates for attorneys and support staff.
- Hearing attendance rates.
- Litigation rates, if different.
- Travel expenses, copying charges, and other reimbursable costs.
- Any proposed annual retainer, if applicable.

E. Conflict Disclosure

Disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest involving:

- The City of Johnstown;
- City officials;
- Current zoning applicants;
- Other municipal clients in Cambria County.

8. Submission Requirements

One electronic PDF copy shall be submitted to:

City Clerk

City of Johnstown
401 Main Street
Johnstown, PA 15901

Email: jburkhart@johnstownpa.gov

Submission Deadline: 9/18/2026

Late submissions may be rejected.

9. Reservation of Rights

The City of Johnstown reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all proposals.
- Waive informalities or irregularities in proposals.
- Request additional information from respondents.
- Conduct interviews with selected firms.
- Negotiate terms and fees with the selected respondent.
- Cancel this RFP at any time if determined to be in the City's best interest.

10. Equal Opportunity

The City of Johnstown is an Equal Opportunity Employer and encourages proposals from qualified firms without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other protected status.

11. Questions Regarding the RFP

Questions regarding this RFP shall be submitted in writing to:

jburkhart@johnstownpa.gov

City of Johnstown

401 Main Street

Johnstown, PA 15901

Responses to material questions may be distributed to all known respondents.

Issued By:

City of Johnstown, Pennsylvania

Issue Date: 08/31/2026