



# Request for Qualifications (RFQ) City of Olympia | Capital of Washington State

## Hearing Examiner and Pro Tem Hearing Examiner

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is for the City of Olympia (City) to solicit Statements of Qualifications (SOQ) from qualified respondents to serve as the City of Olympia Hearing Examiner, and an additional individual or firm to serve as the Pro Tem Hearing Examiner.

The City of Olympia is committed to being an inclusive, affirming, and equitable place for our community members and staff to live, play, and work. We adhere to the non-discriminatory treatment of all persons in employment and the delivery of services and resources. We strongly encourage submissions from minorities, women, and disadvantaged business enterprises.

**The deadline for submission of Statements of Qualifications is 4:00 pm Pacific Standard Time, Friday, January 30, 2026.** Earlier responses are welcome. **Only electronic submissions will be accepted.**

### **BACKGROUND**

The City seeks to recruit a Hearing Examiner to hear certain land use appeals, development proposals, administrative interpretations/determinations, administrative appeals, and related matters. The City is also seeking to recruit a Pro Tem Hearing Examiner to hear these matters in the absence of the Hearing Examiner. The current Hearing Examiner contract expires on April 30, 2026. The City does not currently have a contract for Pro Tem Hearing Examiner services.

### **PRELIMINARY SCOPE OF WORK**

Services may include all activities and functions authorized by OMC Chapters 18.70 and 18.82. In general, Olympia's Hearing Examiner holds public hearings and decides matters related to land development, including but not limited to:

- Request for variances and conditional use permits
- Preliminary plat approvals
- Shoreline conditional use permits and shoreline variances
- Appeals of administrative decisions
- Land use applications referred to the Hearing Examiner

See Olympia Municipal Code 18.70 and 18.82.120

(<http://www.codepublishing.com/wa/olympia/>) regarding the Olympia Hearing Examiner's authority and jurisdiction.

Both daytime and evening hearings are conducted. These hearings generally have been scheduled twice monthly on Monday evenings. Scheduling is by consultation with the Community Planning and Economic Development Director's designee. Hearing recordings and other meeting support services are provided by the City. Decisions are to be issued timely and in writing as prescribed by law.

## **OBJECTIVES**

To hire a qualified and experienced Hearing Examiner to serve the City of Olympia in accordance with state and local laws, to hear certain land use appeals, development proposals, administrative interpretations/determinations, administrative appeals, and related matters. The City is also seeking to recruit a Pro Tem Hearing Examiner to hear these matters in the absence of the Hearing Examiner. The current Hearing Examiner contract expires on April 30, 2026. The City does not currently have a contract for Pro Tem Hearing Examiner services.

## **QUESTIONS**

For questions about this RFQ, please contact Tim Smith, Director of Community Planning and Economic Development, and the RFQ Coordinator via email at [tsmith@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:tsmith@ci.olympia.wa.us). The email subject line should contain the verbiage "Questions regarding the Hearing Examiner and Pro Tem Hearing Examiner". Questions via telephone will not be accepted. All questions to this solicitation must be sent to the RFQ Coordinator via email by **Friday, January 9, 2026 at 4:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time (PST)**. Questions received after this date may not be answered.

All questions will be answered via an addendum posted on the City of Olympia website.

**To Make Public Records Request:** To obtain records related to this RFQ via a public records request, please visit our Public Records Webpage at <https://www.olympiawa.gov/publicrecords>. Public records fees apply.

## **SCHEDULE**

The following schedule is to inform respondents of the estimated timetable of the SOQ preparation, evaluation, and award. Please note the following dates when preparing your SOQ. The City reserves the right to modify this schedule at its discretion; deadlines for questions and SOQ submissions will never shorten.

SOLICITATION SCHEDULE	DATE
RFQ Issued	December 30, 2025
<b>Deadline for Questions</b>	<b>4:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time Friday, January 9, 2026</b>
City Issues Q&A Addendum	January 16, 2026
<b>Statements of Qualifications due</b>	<b>4:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time January 30, 2026</b>
Finalist(s) selected and notified (Tentative)	February 6, 2026
Selection Notification (Tentative)	March 2, 2026

### **STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS REQUIREMENTS**

Interested parties must submit a complete Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) in PDF format. The SOQ must include the following components:

1. **Letter of Interest** - no more than one page in length and include contact information and signature. Please indicate whether you are interested in the Hearing Examiner or Pro Tem Hearing Examiner position. The letter or an attachment to the letter should state all proposed rates and charges including the rate range for hour rate charges. Rates and charges are requested for informational purposes only and will not be scored as part of the SOQ evaluation. Letter should also describe whether applicant is willing and able to provide mentorship to individuals seeking to advance into the profession of providing hearing examiner services.
2. **Summary of qualifications, experience, and availability** – this must be no more four (4) pages in length. It should summarize the applicant’s qualifications to be a Hearing Examiner, relevant experience, and the availability of the applicant to participate in the RFQ process and to provide services to the City.
3. **Method and approach** – this must be no more than two (2) page in length and consist of a summary of the applicant’s approach to providing hearing examiner services and conducting an administrative hearing, including whether the use of “plain talk” is used in the conduct of hearings to assist community members with an understanding of the hearing procedures and issues considered by the hearing examiner in making rulings on cases.

4. **Example of written work** – at least two examples of the applicant’s written decisions or similar products must be provided along with the invoices for those decisions or an explanation about why such invoices cannot be provided.
5. **Example of Rules of Procedure** – The City’s Hearing Examiner is authorized to adopt rules of procedure. The submittal shall include an example of rules of procedure.
6. **Professional References** – at least two professional references, including phone number and other contact information. No more than one page.
7. **Mandatory Bidder Forms** - Include the completed forms attached as Exhibit A (*SOQ Signature Sheet*) and Exhibit B (*Statement of Compliance with Nondiscrimination Requirement and Equal Benefits Declaration Form*). These forms are mandatory and will be evaluated on a pass/fail basis.

**SOQ EVALUATION**

A selection committee of City staff will evaluate consultant qualifications. Selected candidates for Hearing Examiner and Pro Tem Hearing Examiner will be invited for interviews with the City’s Land Use and Environment Committee (LUEC), which is a subcommittee of the Olympia City Council. The LUEC will make a final ranking and will make a selection for recommendation to the City Council based on qualifications, demonstrated competence and technical response to the Request for Qualifications.

Results of reference checks will be used to confirm finalist ranking.

The scoring for the SOQ is as follows:

Criteria	Maximum Points
Knowledge and experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjudication or litigation related to land use planning and zoning</li> <li>• Development project review</li> <li>• Growth management</li> <li>• State Environmental Policy Act</li> <li>• Subdivision platting</li> <li>• Shoreline development</li> <li>• Design review</li> <li>• Administrative hearings and procedures</li> <li>• Public works/engineering</li> <li>• Impact fees</li> </ul>	20

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Code enforcement</li> <li>• Constitutional principles</li> </ul>	
Experience with writing legally defensible land use decisions or similar products	20
Approach to quality control, case management and decision delivery	15
Making effective use of public resources	10
Experience and manner of holding public meetings and quasi-judicial proceedings and use of “plain talk” in the conduct of hearings	10
Readiness, availability, and familiarity with the process of conducting administrative hearings and quasi-judicial proceedings	10
Experience adopting and administering Rules of Procedure	5
Licensed to practice law in the State of Washington	5
Willingness to provide mentorship to individuals seeking to advance into the profession of providing hearing examiner services	5
Total possible score	100

**STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS SUBMISSION**

Statements of Qualification shall be submitted to the City by email to Tim Smith, Director, Community Planning & Economic Development, RFQ Coordinator, at tsmith@ci.olympia.wa.us. **Only emailed submissions will be accepted.**

The deadline for submission of the Statement of Qualifications is **4:00 pm Pacific Standard Time, Friday, January 30, 2026**. The timestamp of the City of Olympia email system will be considered the official time of submittal. Statements of Qualifications submitted after this deadline will not be accepted. Any errors discovered after RFQ submission deadline must remain and cannot be adjusted.

**CONTRACT**

The City anticipates awarding one (1) or more contracts to the successful respondent(s) for a duration of two years, with an option of extending contract(s) once for an additional two years upon mutual written agreement between the parties to the contract.

The City of Olympia’s [Professional Services Agreement](#) will be the contract document for these services. It is expected that firms are familiar with and willing to agree to the terms of the agreement when submitting a SOQ. The executed agreement shall reflect the specifications stated in this RFQ and the final scope of work between the City and the selected firm. The City will not sign any company’s service agreement, contract or any other form of agreement. The City does reserve the right to extract certain language from a company’s agreement and incorporate it into the City contract, if agreed upon by both parties. The Agreement may be amended upon the mutual written agreement of the City and the respondent.

These contracts are subject to certification of equal benefits provided to all employees. All respondents are advised that the Statement of Compliance with Nondiscrimination Requirement and Equal Benefits Declaration Form (attached as Exhibit "B") will be used for this project.

A copy of the City's Professional Services Agreement template can be obtained at:  
[https://cms7files.revize.com/olympia/Document\\_center/Government/Contracts%20&%20Purchasing/ProfessionalServicesAgreement-122325.pdf](https://cms7files.revize.com/olympia/Document_center/Government/Contracts%20&%20Purchasing/ProfessionalServicesAgreement-122325.pdf)

### **PAYMENT FOR SERVICES**

Payment for services will be made in accordance with the fee schedule/milestone payment schedule agreed upon in the contract and a voucher or invoice is submitted in the form specified in the contract, and the same is approved by the appropriate City representative. Payment shall be made on a monthly basis, within thirty (30) days after receipt of such voucher or invoice.

### **INSURANCE**

The selected firm must procure and maintain for the duration of this Agreement insurance that meets or exceeds the following limits:

- Automobile Liability insurance with a minimum combined single limit for bodily injury and property damage of \$1,000,000 per accident.
- Commercial General Liability insurance shall be written with limits no less than \$2,000,000 each occurrence and \$2,000,000 general aggregate.
- Professional Liability insurance shall be written with limits no less than \$1,000,000 per claim and \$1,000,000 policy aggregate limit.
- Workers' Compensation coverage as required by the Industrial Insurance laws of the State of Washington.

The City of Olympia, its officers, officials, employees, and volunteers must be included as additional insureds on the policy.

A Certificate of Insurance and corresponding Additional Insured Endorsement form(s) must be provided to and approved by the City before work can begin.

The cost of such insurance shall be paid by the Consultant.

Please refer to Section 11 of the [Professional Services Agreement](#) to review the full insurance requirements.

## **TITLE VI**

The City of Olympia, in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252, 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000d to 2000d-4) and the Regulations, hereby notifies all respondents that it will affirmatively ensure that any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, disadvantaged business enterprises will be afforded full and fair opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in consideration for an award.

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

1. All SOQs will be reviewed by the City to determine compliance with the requirements of this RFQ. Failure to meet any requirement may result in the SOQ being deemed non-responsive.
2. Submitting an SOQ does not obligate the City to award a contract or reimburse any costs incurred in the preparation or presentation of the response, including but not limited to site visits, interviews, or demonstrations.
3. All SOQs and accompanying documentation submitted in response to this RFQ become the property of the City and are subject to public disclosure under Washington State law.
4. SOQs must remain valid for ninety (90) days following the submission deadline.
5. Respondents are solely responsible for ensuring receipt of the most current RFQ and all issued addenda.
6. Respondents must promptly notify the City of any ambiguities, inconsistencies, or errors in the RFQ. Failure to do so will be interpreted as acceptance of the RFQ as written.
7. The City reserves the right to reject any or all SOQs; waive minor informalities or irregularities; request additional information for evaluation purposes; revise or amend the RFQ through written addenda; negotiate final terms with the selected respondent(s); and decline to award a contract as a result of this RFQ.
8. Any resulting agreement will be in a format provided by the City and will reflect the requirements of this RFQ.

9. The selected respondent must obtain a City of Olympia business license prior to contract execution. Information can be found on the City of Olympia website at [https://www.olympiawa.gov/business/business\\_licenses.php](https://www.olympiawa.gov/business/business_licenses.php).
10. A certificate of insurance and additional insured endorsement meeting the requirements in the City's Professional Services Agreement must be submitted upon notification of award.
11. The selected respondent must comply with all applicable federal, state, and City regulations, including labor laws.
12. Any resulting contract shall be governed by the laws of the State of Washington, with legal actions brought in Thurston County, Washington.
13. By submitting an SOQ, the respondent acknowledges the City's right to manage the solicitation process in accordance with applicable laws and agrees to follow any formal protest procedures set forth in the RFQ.
14. SOQs may be modified by the respondent prior to the submission deadline by providing written notice to the RFQ Coordinator.
15. SOQs may be withdrawn by the respondent by providing written notice to the RFQ Coordinator.

**Exhibit "A"**  
**SOQ SIGNATURE SHEET**

Solicitation Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Legal Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Unified Business Identifier (UBI) No.: \_\_\_\_\_

M/W/DBE Certification No. (If Applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

**For questions regarding this Statement of Qualifications, the City RFQ Coordinator should contact the following individual:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Authorized Official**

The Consultant is hereby advised that by signature of this Statement of Qualifications, they are deemed to have acknowledged all requirements and signed all certificates contained herein.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person Signing: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

***Exhibit "B"***  
**STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH NONDISCRIMINATION REQUIREMENT  
AND  
EQUAL BENEFITS DECLARATION**

The Olympia City Council mandates compliance with the City's *Nondiscrimination in Delivery of City Services or Resources* ordinance (OMC 1.24) and *Employee Benefits* ordinance (OMC 3.18) for all services provided by City employees or through contracts with other entities. All contract agencies or vendors and their employees must understand and fully carry out the City's nondiscrimination policy. Accordingly, each City agreement or contract for services contains language that requires an agency or vendor to agree that it shall not unlawfully discriminate against an employee or client based on any legally protected status. This includes but is not limited to: race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, sex, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, or the presence of any disability and any other status protected from discrimination by state or federal law. Unlawful discrimination includes transphobic discrimination or harassment, including transgender exclusion policies or practices in employee benefits.

Listed below are methods to ensure that this policy is communicated to your employees, if applicable.

- Nondiscrimination provisions are posted on printed material with broad distribution (newsletters, brochures, etc.).
- Nondiscrimination provisions are posted on applications for service.
- Nondiscrimination provisions are posted on the agency's web site.
- Nondiscrimination provisions are included in human resource materials provided to job applicants and new employees.
- Nondiscrimination provisions are shared during meetings.

**Failure to implement at least two of the measures specified above or to comply with the City of Olympia's nondiscrimination ordinance constitutes a breach of contract.**

By signing this statement, I acknowledge compliance with the City of Olympia's Nondiscrimination ordinance by the use of at least two of the measures specified above.

If this contract is valued at \$50,000 or more, I affirm that Consultant listed below complies with the City of Olympia Equal Benefits Ordinance (OMC 3.18) and shall, prior to contracting with the City, have policies in place prohibiting discrimination in the provision of employee benefits.

Should I operate as a sole proprietor, I agree not to discriminate against any client, or any future employees, based on any status protected from discrimination by state or federal law.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Signatory

\_\_\_\_\_  
Consultant Name