



NORTH BRANCH

Request for Proposals

Executive Search Firm

City Administrator Recruitment

Proposals Due

May 22, 2024 @ 4:30 pm

RFP Contact

Jason Ziemer, Interim City Administrator

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(651) 277-5227

I. Background & Purpose

The City of North Branch is a Minnesota Statutory Plan A City with a City Council / City Administrator form of government. An elected City Council, consisting of a part-time Mayor and four council members elected at large, are responsible for setting the policy and overall direction for the City, which includes legislative decisions, and approval of the city budget. City employees, under the direction of a City Administrator, carry out council decisions and provide day-to-day services. The City Administrator provides leadership, direction and guidance to all City departments and is accountable to the City Council.

North Branch is centrally located between the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area and northern Minnesota cabin country, making the community a desirable location for residents and businesses seeking small town living with all of the essential amenities. Specifically, the City boasts excellent schools; ample parks and open space and recreation areas; a quaint, historic downtown; and an ever-evolving mix of housing options. As a result, North Branch is the largest and fastest growing city in Chisago County with a population north of 12,000 people. The community is active and engaged, as such, the City is committed to open government and strengthening connections between residents, businesses and community partners.

The City of North Branch is seeking an experienced executive recruitment firm to conduct a thorough search for its next City Administrator. The firm must have demonstrated success in identifying executives for organizations – particularly municipal organizations – of similar size and scope. The search process and resulting hire must be consistent with the City's values and vision, and must fulfill the mission and key priorities of the City Council.

The City Administrator position is vacant due to the resignation of the previous City Administrator, who had been in that role for seven (7) years. The City Administrator serves as the Chief Administrative Officer for the City and directly supervises leaders in Finance, Human Resources staff, Information Technology, Liquor Operations, Community Development, Police, Fire, Parks and Public Works.

II. Values, Vision & Key Priorities

The current Values and Vision for the City of North Branch, as defined by the City's Comprehensive Plan, are stated as the following:

Values

1. Strong sense of community.
2. Hometown feel.
3. Commitment to parks and trails.
4. Encouragement of biking and walking.
5. Quality schools.

Vision

North Branch is a growing and safe community with outstanding natural and recreational amenities and opportunities for all, and well-maintained infrastructure, vibrant business districts and neighborhoods, and provides residents with an excellent quality of life.

Key Priorities

- Strategic Planning: Work with the City Council and City staff to determine the immediate and long-term priorities, objectives and outcomes for the community to establish direction and decision-

making processes for the Council and staff.

- Effective Governance: Focus on good communication and teamwork, transparency, respect values and process, heed meeting decorum and timely decision-making, and build citizen engagement and relationships.
- Asset Maintenance and Management: Develop an Asset Management Plan for all City assets, including but not limited to: vehicles and equipment, facilities, parks, streets and utilities, etc. The Plan shall establish the highest quality for the capital investments of the City by prioritizing areas of need, identifying costs, and planning for future growth.
- Financial Wellness: Balance spending with an emphasis on current service levels and a planned approach for future needs of a growing community that strengthens the financial sustainability of the City by leveraging future resources of an growing tax base, establishing solid reserves, maintaining a high bond rating, and improving efficiencies and innovation.
- Community Affairs: Consider policies and practices that benefit and positively engage and inform the community.

III. Scope of Work and Deliverables

The City of North Branch is seeking proposals from qualified companies to fulfill the recruitment process to hire the next City Administrator. The company should provide the following deliverables, at a minimum:

1. Collaborate with the City Council, City staff, representatives from key stakeholder groups, and selected community members to define and identify the ideal characteristics, attributes, and professional experience and other qualities of the City Administrator for the City.
2. Review and discuss with the City Council the previous/current role and expected role of the City Administrator, provide sample job duties and descriptions, and create/update the duties and description for the North Branch City Administrator, as necessary.
3. Meet with Council Members, staff, advisory boards and commissions representatives, key stakeholder groups (i.e. School District, Chamber of Commerce, Chisago County, etc.), and selected community members to gather input regarding ideal candidates for the position.
4. Work with the City Council to develop and execute a communication strategy to ensure open and transparent communication regarding the City Administrator search process.
5. Work with the City Council and City staff to develop a position profile and recruitment brochure.
6. Develop a recruitment strategy and timeline for hiring the next City Administrator.
7. Conduct a thorough search – regionally and nationally – through appropriate advertising, outreach and professional networks, including the League of Minnesota Cities, State and National City Management Association, and other platforms not typically used by or accessible to the City.
8. Facilitate and communicate the application process, including posting of job announcements on job boards; accept and acknowledge applications; and notify applicants of selection process status throughout each step in the process.
9. Conduct initial evaluation of applications, including checking for minimum qualifications; conducting initial resume reviews; scoring qualified applicants; and conducting initial interviews, background screenings and reference checks.
10. Provide a diverse and qualified candidate pool of not more than 12 candidates to the City Council for review, with a recommended list of potential semi-finalists and/or finalists for interviews.
11. Schedule first round semi-finalist interviews and manage correspondence with candidates; coordinate semi-finalist interview panel.
12. Facilitate the narrowing of the candidate pool to finalists with the City Council; arrange finalist interviews and related schedule.

13. Organize finalist interview panel(s) including the Mayor and Council Members, City staff, representatives from key stakeholder groups and/or select community members; develop interview questions and evaluation rubric.
14. Assist the City Council with final candidate selection, including communication with the candidate about the process and any conditions of employment, and with the negotiations and offer.
15. Collaborate with the City Attorney on the initial offer of employment and Employment Agreement for the person selected as City Administrator.

IV. Project Schedule

PROPOSAL AND SELECTION TASK	DATE
Request for Proposal Announcement	04/23/2024
Deadline for Questions from Firms @ 4:30 pm	05/03/2024
City Response to Questions	05/08/2024
Proposals Due @ 4:30 pm	05/22/2024
City Council Select Firms for Interviews	05/28/2024
Firm Interviews @ 3:00 pm	06/04/2024
Firm Selected & Contract Approved	06/11/2024

Firms intending to submit a RFP to the City for consideration shall notify the City of its intent to do so; notice shall be sent in writing to: jasonz@ci.north-branch.mn.us. Firms selected for an interview shall be advised as to presentation content, preparation questions, etc., as directed by the City Council.

During the evaluation process, the City reserves the right to request additional information or clarifications from a firm, to allow corrections of errors and/or omissions, or to modify the schedule. All questions regarding this RFP must be submitted, in writing, to the same email address by the deadline stated above. The City shall also respond, in writing, to questions received from firms.

The City reserves the right to amend, withdraw or cancel this RFP at any time. Any amendments, interpretations, or corrections to this RFP shall be by written addendum to the RFP, and will be issued electronically to all firms notifying their intent to submit a proposal; addenda shall also be posted on the City’s Web site at: www.ci.north-branch.mn.us. Companies shall acknowledge receipt of all addenda in their statement of proposal.

V. Budget

Firms are expected to provide a cost of service based on the scope of work listed and experience having facilitated said work before. Firms shall provide a base cost of service related to this RFP, and may also provide a list of additional services the City Council may consider, based on the firm’s understanding of the work described herein. Although the City Council will approve a lump sum budget, firms shall provide cost detail for each phase of the work to be performed.

VI. Proposal Submissions Process

A. Due Date

Proposals received after 4:30 pm on May 22, 2024 will not be considered.

B. Submission Requirements

1. Proposals must be typewritten and sent in PDF format.
2. Submit proposals by email or mail and addressed to Human Resources.
Email: raginiv@ci.north-branch.mn.us
Mail: City of North Branch, 6408 Elm Street, PO Box 910, North Branch, MN 55056

C. Format

For clear comparison and evaluation, proposals must be in the following format.

1. Cover Page

- Proposal Title
- Company: Name & Address
- Contact: Name, Title, Phone Number & Email Address
- Date of Proposal

2. Cover Letter

- Describe the company's mission, vision, and values and how they align with the mission, vision, and values of the City of North Branch.
- Describe company's prior experience providing similar services described in this RFP.
- Describe the qualifications of key personnel involved in the scope of work.

3. State of Proposed Work

- Methodology: An overview of the approach to providing the services detailed above.
- Timeline: Propose a concrete, reasonable timeline for the completion of each component in the process, including important meetings and contacts with the City's evaluation team.
- Budget and Deliverables: Provide a detailed budget, including cost description for each service and deliverable, payment milestones, and clear identification of optional services and reimbursable costs not included in basic fees, including hourly rates.

VII. Proposal Evaluation and Selection

The City Council shall evaluate all RFPs received by the City. Proposals shall be evaluated based on the form and format of proposals and established criteria to determine the firms that best demonstrate the ability and reliability to perform the work with integrity. The City reserves the right to request additional information or clarifications, to allow corrections of errors or omissions, or to modify the proposal schedule.

A. Proposal Evaluation

The City Council shall examine each proposal initially to ensure it follows the proposal format and instructions in this RFP. Proposals that do not follow the specific format may not be considered; late proposals will not be considered.

Proposal evaluation criteria shall include, but not be limited to the following:

1. Experience of company in finding and placing municipal and government leaders and providing the scope of services outlined in this RFP, including years and history.

2. Experience and qualifications of key personnel.
3. Methodology.
4. Timeline.
5. Cost Proposal.
6. Commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
7. Understanding of the City's needs and expectations.
8. Experience and commitment to facilitate Council and stakeholder consensus.
9. Track record of effective community engagement.

B. Additional Questions and Interviews

After the initial review, the City Council may narrow the number of companies submitting proposals, and request additional information, if necessary, or select companies for in-person interviews. If additional is requested, companies shall provide their responses within five (5) business days following receipt of the inquiry. The City Council shall conduct in-person interviews with the firms selected by City Council majority.

C. Final Evaluation

The following criteria shall be used for final evaluation of proposals:

1. Initial proposal.
2. Presentation, interview and additional questions.
3. References.
4. Final cost proposal.

D. Contract Award

Final decision approval of the contract is the responsibility of the City Council. The City Council also reserves the right to reject any or all proposals.

E. Appeals Process

Protests of the award must be made in writing and must specifically state the grievance. All protests must be filed with the City Attorney's Office within 10 calendar days after issuance of notice to award. Contact: Nicholas Garcia-Lisle at nkcgarcialisle@flaherty-hood.com

VIII. Additional Information

A. Rights of Review

The City reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or to request additional information. This RFP shall not commit the City to engage any company for the services described herein.

B. Confidential Material

All materials submitted in response to this RFP will become public record, unless categorized as private, confidential, non-public, or protected non-public under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (MGDPA) ("Protected Materials"). Unrestricted disclosure of proprietary information places it in the public domain. If you believe any of your materials are Protected Materials, you must submit those materials in a separate envelope marked "Confidential Disclosure," along with a cover letter explaining why you believe the materials are Protected Materials. The City will review the materials and approve or deny your request for confidentiality. If the City denies your request for confidentiality, the review team will notify

you and you may withdraw the entire proposal, remove the materials, or include the materials in the non-confidential portion of your submission. Cost, pricing information, and the total proposal amount are public data under the MGDPA. Any costs to preserve Protected Materials shall be your responsibility.

C. Response Ownership

All proposals become the property of the City upon receipt. Selection, rejection, or disqualification of a proposal shall not affect this right.

IX. Contract

The City reserves the right to negotiate the final terms and conditions of the contract, including award amount. If the City and a company are unable to agree upon the entire contract, the City may discontinue negotiations, select another company or reject all of the proposals. The successful company shall execute a contract with the City within ten days after receipt.

A. Contract Ethics

No elected official or employee of the City who exercises any responsibilities in the review, approval or implementation of the proposal shall participate in any decision, which affects his or her direct or indirect financial interests. It is a breach of ethics for any person to offer, give or agree to give any City employee or Council Member or for any City employee or Council Member to solicit, demand, accept or agree to accept from another person or firm, a gratuity or an offer of employment. The company shall not assign any interest in this contract and shall not transfer any interest in the same without the prior written consent of the City. The company shall not accept any private client or project which, by nature, places it in ethical conflict during its representation of the City.

B. Reporting, Insurance, and Financial Liability Limitations

The successful company will report to the Interim City administrator or their designee. The Finance Director shall audit billings, approve payments, establish the schedule and oversee the execution of the contract. The City shall not be liable for any expenses incurred by the company, including but not limited to: expenses associated with the preparation of the proposal, attendance at the interview, preparation of a compensation schedule, or final contract negotiations.

C. Equal Opportunity

The City requires equal opportunity; therefore, the company selected shall not discriminate under the contract against any person in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations and with City policy. The City of North Branch does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, membership on a local human rights commission, disability, or any other basis protected by law in the admission or access to or treatment of employment, program, activities or services.