



October 27, 2020

John King, DVM  
District 3  
Le Sueur County Commissioner  
Via Email: [jking@co.Le-sueur.mn.us](mailto:jking@co.Le-sueur.mn.us)

Darrell Pettis  
County Administrator  
Le Sueur County  
Via Email: [dpettis@co.Le-sueur.mn.us](mailto:dpettis@co.Le-sueur.mn.us)

Re: Revised Letter Proposal for Planning & Zoning Services for Le Sueur County

Dear Commissioner King and Mr. Pettis:

On behalf of WSB, I am pleased to extend this revised proposal to provide Professional Planning & Zoning Services to Le Sueur County. The revisions to the initial proposal of October 19<sup>th</sup> are depicted on pages 3 – 5 and address optional services requested by Mr. Pettis.

WSB has a strong Community Planning and Economic Development group made up of talented and dedicated professionals ready to serve your ongoing land use planning and zoning administration needs. We are excited at the prospect to work with the County of Le Sueur.

### Our Understanding

Based on our conversations, I understand that the County is considering reorganizing its planning and zoning department and is interested in obtaining professional planning consulting services in three areas:

1. Establishment protocols and procedures for the overall planning and zoning function;
2. Administration of the day-to-day planning and zoning function; and
3. Assistance with the creation of a new planning and zoning department.

As discussed, we will work with you to refine this proposal to meet the needs of the County.

### Our Community Planning and Economic Development Team

WSB's Community Planning team includes 8 community planning staff with a wide range of experience, expertise and passions. We work collaboratively within the group and with other services within the company to ensure the best value and responsive customer service for our clients. We provide day-to-day planning services for 16 communities within the state of Minnesota with a variety of scopes.

In addition to regular planning services, WSB's Community Planners are well prepared to undertake special projects for our clients, including small area planning, community engagement efforts, housing studies and comprehensive planning and ordinance writing or revisions. Our Community Planning staff has experience reviewing building permits for new construction projects, coordinating closely with engineering to ensure wetland and surface water permitting requirements and enforcement and managing services such as landscape architecture/park

planning, heritage preservation review, site access management and utility coordination. We have economic development experts who collaborate with ED professionals in the area including Samantha DiMaggio in the City of Le Sueur. We work in many communities with other consultants and can coordinate reviews efficiently and effectively with a variety of partners including attorneys, applicants and residents using leading edge technology platforms to share files and collaborate virtually. We employ these tools not only to make the most up-to-date documents accessible by multiple collaborators throughout the planning and land application process; we use them to improve quality, minimize lost time and decrease frustration for both the County, the applicants and local residents and businesses.

### **Your WSB Team**

The staff from our team listed below are prepared to assist with your planning and zoning needs specifically because of their broad range of planning experience, attention to detail, and experience working together in times of transition for client planning departments. Our full team will also be available to assist as needs arise in their respective areas of expertise. In my experience, having two planners assigned to a community has worked well for providing the best fit for the planning/zoning task and allows us to provide exemplary coverage to our client communities while making efficient use of taxpayer's dollars.

Our team approach to personnel includes a Planner, Kristin Moen, for day-to-day planning and a Senior Planner, Molly Just, for as-needed consultation and guidance on more complex applications and issues, as well as oversight accountability and quality control management for WSB's planning services offering.

Kristin will be the first point of contact with property owners, developers and applicants. She will take the primary responsibility for coordinating permits, reviewing applications, preparing staff reports and attending meetings. Molly will serve to support Kristin and the County and advise on complex applications and issues. Kristin and Molly have the ability to access the full team of WSB professionals that include GIS and IT specialists, environmental scientists, municipal engineers, economic development specialists and many other experts if a situation warrants this additional need.

#### Kristin Moen, Planner (Billing Rate: \$89/hour)

Kristin will be the primary point of contact for all residents and applicants. She will conduct majority of the day-to-day planning scope of work. Kristin serves as the Planner for the City of Osseo, where Molly serves as the Senior Planner. This approach worked well during a time of transition for Osseo. Kristin's experience includes code enforcement, comprehensive planning, small area planning, and zoning ordinance work, which gives her an understanding of how big-picture decisions and policies are implemented daily.

In the past year, she has served several communities including Victoria and Burnsville with planning and zoning services, has worked on a zoning code update for Austin, MN, and has completed a small area plan around a future I-94 interchange for the City of Dayton. The combination of Kristin's work and lived experience in communities of all shapes and sizes – from small rural communities to large metropolitan areas – prepares her well to identify with and respond to the needs and desires that are unique to each community she serves.

#### Molly Just, AICP, Senior Planner (Billing Rate: \$137/hour)

Molly will be the County's designated Senior Planner, providing back-up and assistance on any complex or high-level matters that may arise. Molly will take the lead on identifying the planning needs for the County and establishing the planning and zoning protocols and procedures moving forward for the County. She will also be the lead on advising the County for a future internal

planning and zoning function. Molly is a certified community planner with 18 years of professional experience. Most of her career has been spent in the public sector as a City Planner or Community Development Director. She started her career working in a law firm for private developers where she obtained land use approvals from municipalities in the Washington, DC area. Most of her time is currently spent advising clients on development review, housing and wholesale zoning updates.

### Scope of Work

*Establishing Protocols & Procedures.* We anticipate that the first six months would involve identifying the day-to-day planning and zoning practices of the County and establishing actionable protocols and procedures to ensure their proper administration. See the attached sample protocols and procedures document (Exhibit A). This work would benefit the County in the long term and would occur alongside the routine customer-facing services.

*Pending and Future Special Projects.* Please identify any projects, such as zoning and comprehensive plan amendments underway or proposed to start during the term of this contract. WSB is accustomed to picking up such projects and carrying them across the finish line.

*Day-to-Day Planning.* This is the kind of work that is fundamental to carrying out the work that is required by statute and to meet the needs of the customers of a planning & zoning office. In Southern Minnesota, we have supported Sibley County and Freeborn County with day-to-day planning services. We provide day-to-day planning services for many “lake” communities and understand the challenges involved in administering the reuse of lakeside cabin lots as modern homesteads and higher end vacation homes.

*Front Counter Planning & Zoning:* If desired, WSB will be the point of contact for all planning & zoning questions. WSB can also hold office hours to provide an in-person customer experience.

#### *Permit Administration:*

- Receipt and tracking of permits sent to WSB by the County. Ask about our Datify tracking and coordination system!
- Application review to determine which (if any) land use approvals are needed.
- If no land use approvals are needed, WSB reviews the permit for compliance with the County Code and coordinates with internal County staff to issue the permit. Upon request, WSB is able to provide civil engineering services for site review.

#### *Land Use Applications (including CUPs, variances, rezoning and plat applications):*

- If a land use approval is needed, WSB advises the applicant and coordinates the submittal and review process according to statute and County ordinance.
- WSB prepares all “packet” materials for the appointed and elected commissions.
- WSB presents the application at commission meetings.
- WSB prepares approval letter with findings of fact and directs applicant on necessary next steps.

*Assistance with creation of a new planning & zoning department.* Once protocols and procedures are in place and running smoothly, we will have the opportunity to suggest what skills and staffing levels would be needed for an internally staffed department.

### Invoices

WSB will send itemized invoices to the County monthly. We are able to create separate invoices for each permit and land use application so that our costs may be passed along to the applicant, if possible. Notes are included with each time entry, so that you have documentation on what work our staff has completed.

### Compensation

We see value to both the County and WSB in compensation based on an agreed upon monthly retainer. The County can consistently budget for planning and zoning services and WSB can consistently allocate the proper resources to the County. We are able to approximate the time needed for various permits and applications. To inform an estimate we then need to know about how many applications to expect and so we obtained the following approximate figures for permits and land use applications.

- Approximate Number of Zoning Permits and Land Use Applications.  
50 Land Use & Zoning Applications  
160 Zoning Permits Reviewed
- An approximation of time spent on Front Counter Planning & Zoning. This number is more of a guess at this point.

The table below illustrates a monthly retainer for the likely hours necessary for land use and zoning applications, zoning permits, planning and zoning inquiries, and set up and maintenance of departmental protocols and procedures.

Category	Hours Per Month	Cost per Month
Permits & Land Use Applications	67	\$5,427
Inquiries (Front Counter)	40	\$3,240
Departmental Representation & Coordination/ P&Z Protocols and Procedures	25	\$2,025
	132	\$10,692

#### *Current and Proposed Staffing Levels:*

Current hours per month: 320 two FTEs  
Proposed hours per month: 132 two PTEs with no benefits

*Code Enforcement:* Code enforcement services are not anticipated with this contract. We are happy to discuss this further and assist you with establishing a scope of services for code enforcement.

### Optional Services

At the request of the County Administrator and in line with my conversations with Commissioner King, the following services are provided for your consideration.

Optional Services		
1.	<i>Procedure Diagnosis.</i> WSB will analyze the current permit and application procedures and suggest changes to improve the program.	
Major Tasks:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Review current permit and application documents and recent permits and applications</li> <li>b. Targeted outreach to stakeholders on what works and what doesn't</li> <li>c. Identify peer communities and best practices</li> </ul>		
	Deliverable:	This is a 3 to 4-month effort that will deliver a procedure diagnosis report including a list of suggested changes
	Cost:	\$8,800
2.	<i>Zoning Diagnosis.</i> A zoning diagnosis is a report that outlines how the current code is falling short and how it compares with best practices in planning and zoning. This report will include a bulleted list of suggested changes and updates to enable the zoning code to better meet County objectives and the County's vision as it relates to planning & zoning.	
Major Tasks:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Review relevant planning documents, including the existing code, Comp Plan, and any other plans, forms or documents deemed relevant</li> <li>b. Targeted outreach to stakeholders on what works and what doesn't</li> <li>c. Detailed review of the existing code against statute, case law, the County's objectives and vision, and relative to best practices in planning and zoning</li> </ul>		
	Deliverable:	This is a 4 to 6-month effort that will deliver a zoning diagnosis report including a list of suggested changes
	Cost:	\$12,000
3.	<i>Strategic Plan for Planning &amp; Zoning.</i> WSB will identify what is needed to support the planning & zoning function in Le Sueur County. We will identify peer communities, best practices, and suggest staffing and resources.	
Major Tasks:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Review the formal and reveal the informal roles and responsibilities for the planning &amp; zoning function</li> <li>b. Review the formal goals and objectives for planning and zoning in Le Sueur County</li> <li>c. Targeted outreach to stakeholders to determine what works and what could be improved in planning and zoning administration by County staff</li> <li>d. Identify peer planning and zoning communities and best practices</li> </ul>		
	Deliverable:	This is a 4-month effort that will deliver a strategic plan outlining an appropriately sized and funded planning & zoning department to meet the goals and objectives for the planning & zoning function in Le Sueur County.
	Cost:	\$4,800

We are happy to provide a separate scope and budget for Special Projects such as zoning code and comp plan updates, whether pending or future.

**Our rates are inclusive of expenses such as mileage, postage, and typical photo copying.**

**Part of a contract such as this would include regular check-ins to evaluate whether this approach meets the County's needs and the value invested by WSB. The first such check in should be at around the 6-month mark.**

### **Client Satisfaction**

Because of WSB's ongoing commitment to quality services and full client satisfaction for everything we do, I will make myself available for regular check-ins with the designated manager of our contract, the Board of Adjustments, the Planning Commission, and the County Commission as needed. We know that simply being hired does not mean we do the work and send you the invoice. WSB values every client relationship we have and finding new ways of doing things and improving ourselves at every opportunity through ongoing communication and partnership with our clients is engrained in our culture and something that I am personally committed to in my role for WSB.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide professional planning services to the County of Le Sueur. I would be happy to answer any questions you have or talk to you further about our qualifications, or fees, or our approach to helping the County with any specific challenges or achieving strategic long-term goals for your community.

Please don't hesitate to reach out!

**WSB**



Molly E. Just, AICP  
Senior Planner

# EXHIBIT A

## Osseo Planning Protocols and Procedures

Community Development Process		
from 2020 Development Checklist		
<a href="https://www.discoverosseo.com/files/9215/7601/3063/Development_Checklist_Brochure_2020_electronic_version.pdf">https://www.discoverosseo.com/files/9215/7601/3063/Development_Checklist_Brochure_2020_electronic_version.pdf</a>		
	Step	Responsible Party
1	Pre-app meeting encouraged - review proposal and provide appropriate application forms	RG/WSB
2	File Application - on or by deadline (usually 3 <sup>rd</sup> Thurs. of month prior to PC)	Applicant
3	Circulate application internally if needed. Comments due within 2 weeks	WSB
4.	Plan review meeting, if necessary, with applicant and appropriate staff to discuss concerns. Revised plans are basis for Staff Report ( <u>Goal: steps 1-4 before PHN to maintain 60-day timeline</u> )	WSB
5.	Planning Commission Review – public hearing, review and recommendation to Council (usually 3 <sup>rd</sup> Mon.) If no PC items, Riley cancels and sends cancellation notification.	WSB
6.	City Council Action – document action in letter to applicant (CC meeting usually 4 <sup>th</sup> Mon.)	WSB
7.	Non-construction related conditions must be met before building permits issued. If applicable, make a condition of approval so applicant is on notice and monitor for compliance.	WSB
8.	Construction related conditions must be met before Final Project Inspection. If applicable, WSB make a condition of approval so applicant is on notice. Metro West to monitor for compliance.	WSB/Metro West
Technology		
Virtual PC Meeting	Can you set up a City Planner logon within your WebEx account?	RG inquiring
WSB Planning Team		
Kristin Moen, Planner	<a href="mailto:Kmoen@wsbeng.com">Kmoen@wsbeng.com</a> (preferred)	612-322-2121
Molly Just, Senior Planner	<a href="mailto:Mjust@wsbeng.com">Mjust@wsbeng.com</a> (preferred)	612-364-4586

Steps in Application Review		
	Step	Responsible Party
1.	Application Deadline – June 18 (usually 3 <sup>rd</sup> Thurs.)	RG, KB
2.	Completeness Deadline (14 bus. days) – Tuesday, July 9 Completeness Review by RG (WSB as necessary)	Complete applications to WSB
3.	Public Hearing Notice to Abutters – WSB drafts Notice to Abutters, Locate and Notify Map, prepares list of abutters and sends to LL for mailing 2 days before deadline.	WSB and LL
4.	Public Hearing Ad and Posting to Website and in City Hall	LL
5.	Prepare and share draft Staff Report and Presentation with client by noon Tuesday before meeting	WSB
6.	PC Packet Distribution – Thursday, July 16	Due to client BY 12pm Thursday LL or KB distribute packet to PC Included in Packet: WSB prepares agenda/Chair agenda LL includes minutes WSB prepares staff report (with draft resolution) WSB prepares presentation (WSB ensures all relevant application materials are included for each agenda item)
7.	PC Meeting – Monday, July 20	Virtual meetings require a roll-call vote for each item LL receives draft minutes, WSB revises
8.	CC Meeting – Monday, July 27	Due to client BY 12pm Thursday Revised (streamlined) Staff Report (with draft resolution) and revised (streamlined) Presentation