

# **Request for Proposals (RFP)**

## ***Solicitor Services for SALDO Administration - Crawford County Planning***

*Deadline for Proposal Submissions: August 14, 2025 (4:00 p.m. EST)*

*Point of Contact:*

*Zachary Norwood, Director*

*Crawford County Planning*

*[planning@co.crawford.pa.us](mailto:planning@co.crawford.pa.us)*

## 1. Introduction

Crawford County Planning is seeking proposals from qualified law firms to provide legal services in support of implementing and enforcing its **Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO)**, adopted on April 23, 2025, with enforcement commencing on October 20, 2025. The selected firm will serve as a legal advisor and representative on SALDO-related matters, including reviews, hearings, litigation, and general counsel to ensure consistent and lawful ordinance administration across the county.

## 2. Background Overview

Crawford County's recently adopted Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO) represents a landmark step in the County's planning history. This is the first time the County has enacted a comprehensive ordinance to manage subdivision and land development in the municipalities that have not adopted their own SALDO. As such, it plays a critical role in shaping the future growth, infrastructure development, and community character of a large portion of the County.

The SALDO will apply to more than 25 municipalities across Crawford County, covering rural townships, boroughs, and small population centers that collectively represent a significant share of the County's land base. For many communities, this ordinance will serve as the primary regulatory framework for guiding subdivision layout, road design, utility installation, and land development standards.

This makes the role of the selected planning and engineering firm especially vital. The contracted consultant will help ensure a smooth transition into ordinance enforcement for local officials and applicants alike, supporting a culture of fairness, clarity, and constructive compliance.

Notably, the Crawford County SALDO introduces an innovative planning concept rarely used in rural Pennsylvania: the integration of Character Areas, as outlined in Crawford Inspired, the County's 2024 comprehensive plan. Instead of imposing a one-size-fits-all design template, the ordinance leverages these Character Areas to tailor standards and review criteria based on distinct community types. This approach seeks to preserve the individuality of places while ensuring that new development supports the County's broader vision for resilience, vibrancy, and rural integrity.

Firms responding to this RFP must demonstrate not only a command of technical requirements and inspection protocols, but also an appreciation for the contextual nature of this ordinance. Understanding the connection between SALDO regulations and the community-driven priorities identified in Crawford Inspired will be key to a successful and productive partnership with Crawford County Planning.

Crawford Inspired is available for download at [www.crawfordinspired.com](http://www.crawfordinspired.com), and a copy of the County's SALDO is available at [www.crawfordcountypa.net/planning](http://www.crawfordcountypa.net/planning).

### **3. Scope of Services**

Crawford County is seeking a land use law expert or firm who will provide the following, as needed:

#### **A. Legal Review & Advice**

- Interpret provisions of the SALDO and provide written and verbal legal opinions.
- Review SALDO amendments, policy language, enforcement documents, and procedures.
- Assist in the development of model agreements, notices, and legal templates.

#### **B. Representation**

- Represent the County in SALDO-related litigation, appeals, or enforcement actions.
- Attend Planning Commission meetings (as needed) where legal counsel is required.
- Support legal compliance in land use and development decision-making processes.

#### **C. Coordination**

- Collaborate with the Planning Commission, Planning Office, the County's planning and engineering professional services consultant, and municipal officials to ensure a unified interpretation of ordinances.
- Provide guidance related to the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), including relevant case law updates.

Crawford County Planning encourages firms to recommend adjustments to the scope of services that would enhance the partnership, improve the services rendered, and promote a clear, concise, and consistent administration of the County's SALDO.

#### **4. Conflict of Interest Expectations and Requirements**

To avoid conflicts, the County intends to retain a legal firm that will not concurrently represent private sector clients on SALDO matters in Crawford County. Applicants must disclose any existing or potential conflicts of interest.

#### **5. Proposal Submission Requirements**

Each submission must include:

- Cover letter expressing interest in representing Crawford County.
- Qualifications and relevant experience, with emphasis on municipal and land use law.
- Identification of the lead attorney and key team members (include resumes).
- Description of prior experience with SALDO, zoning, or municipal ordinance matters.
- Sample legal memos, briefs, or determinations on land development issues (2 max).
- Fee proposal: hourly rates by position, proposed retainer (if any), and travel policy.
- Disclosure of any current municipal clients in Crawford County or adjacent counties.

Within 10 days of receiving the notice of award, the selected firm must provide:

- A certificate of insurance for general liability in the amount of \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$2,000,000 in aggregate. The general liability certificate must provide a waiver of subrogation in favor of Crawford County. The County must be identified as additionally insured and have primary and non-contributory coverage.
- Documentation of its commercial auto liability insurance, which includes \$1,000,000 of combined single limit coverage, with the County as an additionally insured, and must have primary and non-contributory coverage.
- Documentation of its commercial umbrella insurance with \$2,000,000 coverage.

- Documentation of its professional liability insurance with \$1,000,000 coverage.
- A certificate of workers' compensation insurance proving that their firm complies with the law (employer's liability of 100K/100K/500K statutory minimum). The worker's compensation certificate must provide a waiver of subrogation in favor of Crawford County.

## 6. Project Duration and Contract

The County intends to award a contract for the remainder of 2025 and the entire year 2026. The contract may be extended for up to two additional years, subject to mutual agreement.

## 7. Anticipated RFP Timeline

Crawford County anticipates the following timeline for the RFP process.

Milestone	Date	Notes
<b>RFP Release</b>	June 27, 2025	Publicly issued via County website, planning email list, and direct outreach to known law firms.
<b>Deadline for Questions</b>	July 24, 2025	All inquiries must be submitted in writing to the Planning Office.
<b>Responses to Questions Issued</b>	July 29, 2025	Responses will be posted publicly or distributed via email to all known respondents.
<b>Proposal Submission Deadline</b>	August 14, 2025 (by 4:00 PM EST)	Proposals must be submitted electronically in PDF format. Late submissions will not be accepted.
<b>Initial Proposal Review &amp; Shortlisting</b>	August 18–21, 2025	County Planning staff will score proposals and shortlist top firms for interviews.
<b>Interviews with Shortlisted Firms</b>	Week of August 25–29, 2025	Virtual or in-person interviews with key project personnel. An evaluation committee will recommend a firm.
<b>Final Selection and Notification</b>	September 3, 2025	Top-ranked firm notified. Unsuccessful respondents will be informed after contract execution.

Milestone	Date	Notes
<b>Contract Negotiation and Legal Review</b>	September 4–16, 2025	Includes scope refinement, fee finalization, and legal vetting.
<b>Commissioner Approval and Contract Execution</b>	September 24, 2025	Planned date for the Crawford County Board of Commissioners to approve the contract.
<b>Onboarding &amp; Coordination with County Staff</b>	September 29 – October 17, 2025	Coordination of communication and expectations between parties.
<b>Turnkey Start Date</b>	October 20, 2025	The consultant begins providing legal services under the new agreement.

## 8. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Legal experience in land use and municipal law (30%)
- Cost effectiveness and clarity of fee structure (25%)
- Familiarity with PA MPC and SALDO-related precedent (20%)
- Communication and responsiveness (15%)
- Quality of writing samples and clarity of proposal (10%)

Shortlisted proposals will be invited for a virtual interview with members of the Planning Commission and professional planning staff.

## 10. Submission and Question Instructions

All questions must be submitted electronically in a PDF or Word document through the County's online platform at <https://wkf.ms/4mVK945>. Questions must be submitted by noon (EST) on July 24, 2025. The County will post a response to all questions on our website, [www.crawfordcountypa.net/planning](http://www.crawfordcountypa.net/planning).

All proposals must be submitted electronically in PDF format via the County's online submission platform at <https://wkf.ms/4kCrOmo>. Submission must be received by August 14, 2025, by 4:00 p.m. (EST).

All communication should be directed toward:

Zachary Norwood  
Director, Crawford County Planning  
Email: [planning@co.crawford.pa.us](mailto:planning@co.crawford.pa.us)

The deadline and location requirements of this request bind all parties. Incomplete or late submissions will not be accepted. Proposals shall remain effective, subject to review and approval, for ninety (90) days from the submission deadline. Any information submitted in response to this solicitation may be available to the public following the deadline for the submission of proposals. Crawford County will not be responsible for any costs associated with the preparation and delivery of proposals. Additionally, Crawford County reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, with or without cause, and to waive any irregularities or informalities present in a proposal. The county may also investigate the qualifications of any or all firms submitting proposals.