



Inver Grove Heights City Council

Monday, January 12, 2026 at 5:45 PM

**Veteran's Memorial Community Center Community Room 3
8055 Barbara Avenue, Inver Grove Heights, MN 55077**

AGENDA

NOTICE TO RESIDENTS: Individuals may submit written public comments in advance of the meeting by emailing comments to Rebecca Kiernan (rkiernan@ighmn.gov). Comments received prior to **12:00 p.m.** on Monday, January 12, 2026, will be provided to the Council at or before the January 12, 2026 meeting.

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Approval of Agenda**
4. **Regular Business**
 - A. Approval of Contract with DDA Human Resources, Inc. for City Administrator Recruitment Services
 - B. Approval of Contract with Ellen Hiniker and Hiniker Consulting LLC for Interim City Administrator Services
5. **Adjourn**

This document is available upon a three (3) business day request in alternate formats such as braille, large print, audio recording, etc. Please contact Rebecca Kiernan, City Clerk, at 651.450.2513 or rkiernan@ighmn.gov.



Request for Council Action

SUBJECT: **Approval of Contract with DDA Human Resources, Inc.
for City Administrator Recruitment Services**

MEETING DATE: January 12, 2026
ITEM TYPE: Regular Business
CONTACT: Bridget Nason, City Attorney

ACTION REQUESTED

Council is asked to approve the execution of a contract for the City Administrator Executive Search firm of DDA Human Resources, Inc.

BACKGROUND

City Council discussed the three received requests for proposals at the January 5, 2026, City Council meeting.

It was the consensus of the Council to proceed with DDA Human Resources, Inc. for the executive search for a new City Administrator.

FISCAL IMPACT

The maximum fees plus expenses were listed as \$21,000 due upon completion of the search.

RECOMMENDATION

It is Council's recommendation to approve the contract with DDA Human Resources, Inc.

ATTACHMENTS

1. DDA Executive Search Proposal

December 31, 2025

Mayor and City Council
City of Inver Grove Heights
8150 Barbara Avenue
Inver Grove Heights, MN 55077

Dear Honorable Mayor Dietrich and Members of the Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a proposal to assist the City of Inver Grove Heights with a search for your next City Administrator. Our firm has extensive experience with local governments, and we thoroughly understand the complexities faced by local governments in Minnesota. DDA HR uses a proven, comprehensive process ensuring clients can identify the best candidate for their organization and community.

The attached proposal includes several elements that set us apart in our approach to providing this service. Highlights include:

- **Knowledge:** Our firm comprehensively understands local government in Minnesota, and our consultants are former Administrators with significant experience.
- **Neutral Third Party:** We provide a neutral, objective perspective and ensure the process is focused on assisting the Council with finding the best possible fit. If you select DDA HR, be assured you will not have to deal with political challenges that can creep into the hiring process.
- **Brochure/Profile:** With a Full-Service Executive Search, DDA HR would develop a detailed, professional profile to present the organization in the most positive manner. A sample is attached.
- **Advertising and Outreach:** Our advertising and direct outreach is comprehensive and designed to penetrate deeper and reach more potential candidates. Our depth and scope of outreach is unparalleled.
- **Experience:** DDA HR has conducted more Minnesota city and county executive searches in the last five years than any other firm by a wide margin.
- **Adherence to Deadlines:** When a deadline is established, we will meet it.
- **Video Interview:** DDA HR uses video interviews in the screening process to get quality data that may not be apparent on resumes. These videos are used by the Council to make informed decisions on who to interview. DDA HR believes that the Council should pick candidates to interview, not us. We will make sure you have the information needed to make this effective. You know best.
- **Candidate Communication:** Through direct contact and a sophisticated software system, we ensure candidates understand the process and where they stand at all times. Candidates deserve nothing less.
- **Work Personality Index:** Prior to deciding on final candidates, the Council will receive a personality index report on each person being considered for an interview.
- **Background Check Process:** Instead of doing a comprehensive background check on a single finalist, we do a comprehensive background and reference check on all finalists interviewed by the Council.
- **Intellectual Profile:** Each finalist will complete an intellectual profile measuring verbal reasoning, mathematical and logical reasoning, and overall mental aptitude.

- **Mentoring:** Under the Full-Service Executive Search model, the new City Administrator will receive one year of Leadership Development Mentoring with DDA HR's dedicated mentor, Bart Fischer, to ensure a successful transition into the role.
- **All-Inclusive Pricing (Full-Search only) and À La Carte Services:** Costs for all the services we provide are included. No surprises with us.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Liza M. Donabauer".

Liza Donabauer, Management Consultant
DDA Human Resources, Inc.
Enclosures



CITY OF INVER GROVE HEIGHTS

City Administrator Search Proposal

Submitted by **DDA Human Resources, Inc.**

December 31, 2025



Prepared by:
Liza Donabauer
Management Consultant

CONTENTS OF THE PROPOSAL

- Description of the Firm
- Approach to the Process
- Service Team
- Process Details
- Timeline
- List of Clients
- Fee
- Assurance
- References
- Acceptance
- Addendums

DESCRIPTION OF THE FIRM

DDA Human Resources, Inc. (DDA HR) is a Minnesota-based consulting firm dedicated to serving the human resources needs of local governments. Established as an affiliate of David Drown Associates (DDA), the company was created in response to the growing demand for HR consulting services within the public sector. DDA has served hundreds of cities and counties for over 25 years, while DDA HR has provided human resource services for more than 12 years.

DDA HR's foundation was shaped by the expertise and vision of Gary Weiers, whose leadership was instrumental in building our executive search and HR consulting services from the ground up. Gary's reputation for integrity, thoroughness, and a deep understanding of Minnesota's public sector set the standard for our work. While he is no longer engaged in day-to-day client services, his influence continues to guide our values, processes, and commitment to exceptional service.

The DDA HR team includes 11 experienced practitioners, many former Administrators and HR leaders, who bring hands-on knowledge of local government operations. We are known for a nimble, efficient, and personal approach that delivers tailored solutions at fair and transparent prices, supported by a robust network and deep understanding of the statewide public sector landscape.

Core Services

- Executive Search & Recruitment
- Organizational Studies
- Performance Appraisals
- Classification & Compensation Studies
- Ongoing Maintenance of Classification and Compensation Systems
- Leadership Development Mentoring
- Strategic Planning/Goal Setting Facilitation
- Council/Staff Relationship Building
- MN County HR Technical Assistance Program (through partnership with AMC)

APPROACH TO THE PROCESS

Our approach to this search will be to focus on finding the best fit for the City of Inver Grove Heights. This is accomplished, first and foremost, by listening to what you are saying, understanding your goals and objectives, and building the search process from that foundation.

Our full-service search is an end-to-end process that includes every stage of recruitment from initial input, salary comparisons, and review of job description, to preparing an employment agreement offer for the Council to approve. This package is ideal for clients seeking a thorough, all-inclusive process. Full-service searches include a one-year placement guarantee and one year of leadership development mentoring for the selected candidate.

SERVICE TEAM

LIZA DONABAUER – PROJECT LEAD

Liza is a Management Consultant specializing in Executive Search Services. Since joining DDA HR, she has conducted more than 70 searches for Administrators/Managers, Department Directors, and Executive Directors. She has public administration experience at both the city and county levels in Kansas and Minnesota. She began in Wright County providing administrative support to the Commissioners, Coordinator, and Human Resources Department, later serving as City Administrator in Clearwater, Kansas, and Arlington, Minnesota. Her career has focused on human resource management, community engagement, and leadership development.



Liza holds an MBA with an emphasis in Public Administration from the College of St. Scholastica and is a Certified Diversity and Inclusion Recruiter and AI and Sourcing Recruiter through AIRS®.

Liza will serve as the Project Lead.

Contact Information:

liza@daviddrown.com

612-920-3320 x111

P.O. Box 534

Waconia, MN 55387

Organizations/Affiliations

Liza enjoys working with public administration colleagues through her involvement in:

- MCMA, a state affiliation of ICMA
- MCMA Women in the Profession Committee
- MCMA Annual Conference Planning Committee
- MCMA Education & Outreach Committee
- As Founder of MCMA Hiking in the Profession
- Secretary, Board of Directors, Minnesota Municipal Power Agency
- Publicity Committee for City Clerks & Municipal Finance Officers Association (KS)

BART FISCHER

Bart joined DDA HR in 2023 as a Management Consultant focusing on leadership development mentoring, organizational work, strategic planning facilitation, and executive search services. He has over 20 years of experience as a public sector leader and manager in local government organizations, as well as consulting for public sector clients. His career includes serving as Assistant City Administrator in Newport and Chaska, Minnesota, and as City Administrator in Falcon Heights and Oakdale, Minnesota.



Bart earned his Master's in Public Administration from Metropolitan State University in St. Paul and his bachelor's degree from the University of Northwestern–St. Paul.

Organizations/Affiliations

Bart enjoys working with public administration colleagues through his involvement in:

- MCMA (MN City/County Managers Association)
- MAMA (Metro Area Managers Association)
- ICMA (International City/County Managers Association)
- League of MN Cities

Contact Information:

bart@daviddrown.com

612-920-3320 x119

7383 Hyde Ave S

Cottage Grove, MN 55016

PAT MELVIN

Pat joined DDA HR in 2021 as a Management Consultant specializing in Executive Search Services. He has served in a variety of local government leadership roles, progressing from Special Projects Administrator in Wright County to County Administrator in McLeod County. He also served as City Administrator for Arlington and Minnetonka Beach, Minnesota. His county and city government experience includes policy development, budgeting, human resources (including recruitment), payroll, benefits and workplace investigations, capital improvement planning, contract negotiations, grievance settlements, and management of a group self-insured health insurance plan.

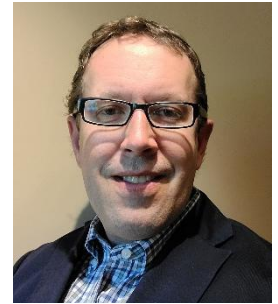
Pat holds a degree in Government and Management from Saint John's University and a master's degree in Public Administration Studies from the University of Minnesota – Mankato, which he earned while working for the City of Edina.

Pat will assist with recruitment and consulting as needed.

Organizations/Affiliations

Pat enjoys working with public administration colleagues through his involvement in:

- AMC (Association of Minnesota Counties)
- MCMA (Minnesota City/County Managers Association)
- ICMA (International City/County Managers Association)



Contact Information:

pat@daviddrown.com

612-920-3320 x116
3620 Northome Ave
Wayzata, MN 55391

LIZ FOSTER

Since joining DDA in 2015, Liz has been involved in over 160 executive search processes and other human resource projects. With certifications as a Professional Recruiter, AI and Sourcing Recruiter, Diversity and Inclusion Recruiter, and Internet Recruiter through AIRS®, Liz performs Recruitment Only search services for clients looking for assistance hiring those hard-to-fill positions.

In addition to recruitment, Liz provides support and assistance to the Management Consultants within the Human Resources Division. While assisting our Management Consultants, some of Liz's duties include community research, creating position profiles and advertisements, posting position openings, assembling interview materials for our clients, and providing other general administrative support to our Management Consultants.

Liz will provide administrative support for this project.



Contact Information:

liz@daviddrown.com

612-920-3320 x108
605 25th Ave NW
Austin, MN 55912

PROCESS DETAILS

STEP 1: PROJECT KICK-OFF & INFORMATION GATHERING

DDA HR will gather and assemble background information pertaining to the organization and position. In addition, Liza will meet with Dave Unmacht and a City representative to review the hiring process and discuss candidate attributes, experience, and other important qualifications. At the same time, the job description will be reviewed and updated as needed, and we will gather relevant comparative salary information for consideration by the Council.

Deliverables:

- Information gathering with Dave Unmacht and City representative.
- DDA HR receives information from the organization such as organizational chart, logos/images, budgets, existing job description, etc.
- Consultant will review the scope of the process and timeline.

STEP 2: DEVELOPMENT OF POSITION PROFILE

Based on the information received from Dave Unmacht and the City, DDA HR will develop a professional position profile that is customized to present the organization in the most positive manner and provide prospective candidates with meaningful information. A draft will be presented to the Council for consideration and approval prior to advertising. For a sample profile, see Addendum A.

Deliverables:

- Draft profile sent to Council approximately one week before the Council meeting.

STEP 3: REVIEW AND APPROVE PROFILE AND SCOPE OF WORK

DDA HR will meet with the Council to review and approve the draft profile, salary range, job description, and scope of work.

Deliverables:

- Review and approval of draft profile, salary range, job description, and scope of work.

STEP 4: RECRUITMENT AND ADVERTISEMENT

DDA HR will make direct contact with possible candidates including those who are not active job seekers or traditional candidates. In addition, we comprehensively advertise the position. These efforts will include local, regional, and national outreach. In today's job market, it is important to reach candidates in ways that were not necessary even five years ago. Our efforts have resulted in 41% of candidates applying from outside of Minnesota. This means that 59% of candidates still are from within the state, so comprehensive strategies are needed.

To address the current challenging job market, we have added advanced recruiting methodologies to our portfolio through LinkedIn's robust recruiter platform. LinkedIn has nearly 1 billion members with over 65 million job seekers visiting LinkedIn Jobs every week. This offers us 100% visibility of all those members. Our job posts receive high visibility for both active and passive candidates across more than 69 million organizations and over 41,000 skills. The recruiter platform provides over 40 advanced recruiting filters, recommended matches, and up-to-date insights allowing us to directly contact individuals that possess the desired backgrounds and/or experiences. At the same time, it allows us to personally connect with candidates in a career focused environment.

Local efforts (within Minnesota) will include:

- Direct outreach to candidates
- League of Minnesota Cities
- Association of Minnesota Counties

- GovernmentJobs.com
- University of Minnesota
- Minnesota Private College Consortium- Augsburg University, Bethel University, Carleton College, College of Saint Benedict, The College of St. Scholastica, Concordia College, Gustavus Adolphus College, Hamline University, Saint John's University, Saint Mary's University, St. Catherine University, St. Olaf College, and the University of St. Thomas
- Minnesota State Colleges and Universities- Bemidji State University/Northwest Technical College, Metro State University, Minnesota State Universities of Moorhead & Mankato, Southwest Minnesota State University, St. Cloud State University, and Winona State University
- Minnesota City County Management Association
- LinkedIn

Regional Outreach

- Direct outreach to candidates
- South Dakota Municipal League
- Iowa League of Cities
- League of Wisconsin Municipalities
- Over 20 universities outside of Minnesota throughout the upper Midwest
- Universities of Iowa, Wisconsin, South Dakota, Nebraska
- LinkedIn

Nationwide Outreach

- Direct outreach to candidates
- National Association of County Administrators
- National League of Cities
- National Association of Counties
- International City/County Management Association
- Women Leading Government
- International Network of Asian Public Administrators
- LinkedIn

The simple DDA HR online application process will be used. This system enables us to efficiently manage applicant flow, and corresponding reference information, and allows us to communicate with each applicant quickly and effectively. We are known for our communication with both the applicant and our client which engages and informs both parties of each step. Additionally, our system also allows us to access, review, and evaluate thousands of prior applicants who may not be actively seeking a job but who may be open to the "right opportunity."

Deliverables:

- Advertising outreach begins with posting on identified websites and social media platforms.
- Direct contact through established professional networks.
- We utilize our database of identified prospective candidates to contact via email or phone call.

STEP 5: INITIAL SCREENING AND REVIEW

DDA HR will complete a comprehensive analysis of every application received and determine approximately 8-12 semifinalists based on job related criteria and desired attributes to complete a video interview. Our clients have most notably been pleased with the video interview component of our process. Video interviews allow our clients to gain additional insight into the candidate's education, experience, personality, as well as their ability to think on their feet, all of which have been said to help lay the foundation for the final interview process. Access to, and viewing of, this information is as simple as clicking on a link from the individual client's laptop, phone, or smart device in a location and at a time that is convenient for them.

Each semifinalist will also complete an information disclosure which gives the candidate an opportunity to proactively address any personal or professional incidents that could be viewed as reflecting negatively on job performance, qualifications, ethics, or other factors. They will also complete a Work Personality Index Select, which assesses the personal characteristics and tendencies that influence an individual's job performance. For more information about the Work Personality Index Select, see Addendum B.

About one week prior to selecting finalists for interviews, the information disclosure, video interview, personality index, cover letter, and resume from each of the semifinalists will be made available to the Council for viewing. This will allow ample time to comprehensively review candidates prior to determining who to bring in for final interviews. Upon reviewing this introductory material, DDA HR will then assist the Council in selecting finalists for interviews. After the Council selects finalists, those not selected will be notified by DDA HR.

Candidate confidentiality when the Council is deliberating is maintained by assigning and referring to each semifinalist as a number. The candidate's names and certain background information are considered public once they are chosen as a finalist.

Deliverables:

- List of approximately 8-12 semifinalists with cover letter, resume, and video interview.
- Results of Work Personality Index Select.
- Results of information disclosure.
- Confirm interview schedule and logistics.
- DDA HR will contact candidates not selected as finalists.

STEP 6: SELECTION

After the Council selects finalists, DDA HR will complete comprehensive background screenings including criminal history, civil court history, verification of education, driver's license review, credit check, and other items. Along with background checking all finalists, DDA HR will conduct character references with current and/or former employers to get a good understanding of each candidate's role and responsibilities, performance and strengths, leadership and management style, communication and interpersonal skills, community engagement, areas for improvement, and overall fit. In addition, DDA HR will administer an Intellect Profile which measures verbal reasoning, mathematical and logical reasoning, and overall mental aptitude. For more information about the Intellect Profile, see Addendum C.

Early in the search process, Liza will discuss interview possibilities including leadership staff participation or options for community involvement through a meet and greet event or interview panel, stakeholder interviews, and full Council interviews, a community tour, lunch with leadership staff, or other functions. Liza will work with organization staff to coordinate all interview logistics.

Prior to interviews, Liza will prepare questions and then facilitate all interviews and other activities the Council determines appropriate. Our goal is to make the process smooth and painless so you can focus all your energy on finding the right person for the job, minimize staff disruptions, and not have to take on the additional burden of managing the hiring process.

Approximately one week prior to the final interview process, the Council will have access to each of the finalists' application materials, video interview, background check results, reference information, information disclosure, a work personality report, and an intellectual profile.

Deliverables:

- List of 3 to 5 finalists, confirming interview schedule and logistics.

- Video Interview.
- Summary of references and background checks.
- Work Personality Index Select and Intellect Profile reports.
- Information Disclosure.
- Cover letter and resume.
- Press release.

STEP 7: OFFER & AGREEMENT

After the interviews conclude, Liza will assist the Council in its deliberations. Working with a designated subcommittee, she will then draft an employment agreement, present an offer to the selected finalist, and negotiate terms in alignment with the parameters established by the Council.

Deliverables:

- Draft employment agreement.
- Present offer to recommended candidate.
- Negotiate agreement terms.
- DDA HR will contact those not selected.

STEP 8: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT MENTORING

As a commitment to the long-term success of the new City Administrator, DDA Human Resources, Inc. will provide one year of leadership development mentoring to the new City Administrator following the hire. The goal of the program is to partner with the organization and the new City Administrator to ensure a successful transition into the new role.

Deliverables:

- Ten, 1.5 hour, in-person or virtual meetings with dedicated mentor, Bart Fischer, DDA Human Resources, Inc. and communication with this mentor outside of regular meetings when needs and challenges arise.
- Onboarding support, strengthening leadership capacity, and ensuring alignment with organizational priorities and goals.

Provide the Council with quarterly updates on mentoring focus, progress, and next steps for new City Administrator.

TIMELINE

This timeline is tentative. The final timeline will be set after the Council's decision to proceed.

**Dates highlighted require Council participation*

ITEM	TASK	COMPLETION DATE
PHASE 1		
Decision by Council to proceed		January 12, 2026
Project Kick-Off & Information Gathering	- Gather all pertinent background information to prepare the position profile - Meet with Dave Unmacht and City representative	February 1, 2026
PHASE 2		
Professional Position Profile	Develop position profile and advertisement	February 16, 2026
Approve Position Profile	Council approves profile, job description, salary range	February 23, 2026
Candidate Recruitment	- Post position immediately upon approval of profile - Comprehensively advertise - Email and phone calls to prospective candidates	February 24, 2026-March 24, 2026
Screening of Applicants	DDA will review and rank applicants based on job related criteria and select top candidates (semifinalists)	March 25, 2026
PHASE 3		
Personality Index	DDA will administer a work-related personality index to all semifinalists	April 5, 2026
Video Interview	Each semifinalist will complete a video interview	April 5, 2026
Selection of Finalists	- Council selects finalists for interviews - DDA will notify candidates not selected as finalists	April 13, 2026
Finalist Evaluation	DDA HR will conduct the following on the finalists: - Background checks (criminal, education, credit, motor vehicle, etc.) - Comprehensive reference checks - Intellect Profile (measures verbal reasoning, mathematical and logical reasoning, and overall mental aptitude)	April 28, 2026
Finalist Packet	DDA HR will provide the Council information including: - Summary of references - Results of background checks - Intellect Profile and Work Personality Index Select reports - Video interview - Resumes, etc.	April 29, 2026
Interviews	DDA HR will prepare all interview materials and be present at all interviews and other functions to assist in facilitation. It is recommended that Council interviews be at a special meeting.	May 6, 2026 Special Meeting
Decision	Council will select candidate for offer	May 6, 2026
Offer and agreement	DDA will negotiate agreement with selected candidate	May 8, 2026
Projected start date	New City Administrator begins	June 2026
Leadership Development Mentoring	Mentoring begins to support onboarding, strengthen leadership capacity, and ensure alignment with organizational priorities and goals	July 2026

LIST OF SEARCH CLIENTS FROM THE PAST THREE YEARS

In addition to the specific references listed on the following page, the City is encouraged to speak with any of the entities listed below:

2025	Client	Recruitment
	City of Granite Falls, MN	Finance Director
	City of Biwabik, MN	City Administrator
	Three Rivers Park District	Chief Financial Officer
	City of Woodbury, MN	Human Resources Manager
	Cook County, MN	County Administrator
	Lake Minnetonka Conservation District	Executive Director
	City of St. Paul Park, MN	City Administrator
	City of Lino Lakes, MN	City Administrator
	Kandiyohi County Economic Development	Executive Director
	City of St. Paul Park, MN	Public Works Supervisor
	Minnesota Inter-County Association (MICA)	Executive Director
	City of Jackson, MN	City Administrator
	City of Red Wing, MN	Council Administrator

2024	Client	Recruitment
	Willmar Municipal Utilities	General Manager
	City of Watertown, MN	City Administrator
	City of Red Wing, MN	Finance & Accounting Manager
	City of Granite Falls, MN	Finance Director
	Anoka County, MN	County Administrator
	Dakota County, MN	County Manager
	Cottonwood County, MN	County Attorney
	City of Maple Lake, MN	City Administrator
	Becker County, MN	County Administrator
	City of Waverly, MN	City Administrator/Clerk
	Mahnomen County, MN	County Administrator
	Steele County, MN	County Administrator
	City of Waconia, MN	Public Services Director
	City of Faribault, MN	City Administrator
	City of Red Wing, MN	Human Resources Manager

2023	Client	Recruitment
	Steele County, MN	Finance Director
	City of Mound, MN	City Manager
	City of Rochester, MN	Finance Director
	Arrowhead Library System	Executive Director
	City of Corcoran, MN	City Administrator
	City of East Grand Forks, MN	City Administrator
	City of Chatfield, MN	City Administrator
	City of Maple Plain, MN	City Administrator
	Albert Lea Housing and Redevelopment Authority	Executive Director
	City of Lakeville, MN	Finance Director
	City of Morris, MN	City Manager
	City of New Hope, MN	City Manager
	City of Winsted, MN	City Administrator
	City of Fairmont, MN	Public Works Director
	City of Credit River, MN	City Administrator
	City of Benson, MN	City Manager
	Dakota 911	Executive Director

DDA is currently conducting searches for the Cities of Maple Lake, Morris, and Staples, Minnesota, Steele County, Minnesota, the Albert Lea Economic Development Agency, Pioneerland Library System, the Southeastern Minnesota Multi-County Housing and Redevelopment Authority, and SouthWest Transit.

FEES

The fee for this Full-Service Executive Search process is \$21,000, payable at the completion of the search. This all-inclusive fee covers professional services and all expenses including consultant's travel, advertising, personality index, intellectual profile, background checks on all finalists, etc. If the course of the full-service search process is followed as put forth in the approved scope of work and no candidate is selected, we will repeat the recruitment once at no additional professional fee. The organization would be responsible for the re-posting/advertising expenses.

If the organization chooses to offer a travel stipend or reimbursement for expenses of the candidates, that cost is handled directly between the organization and the candidates. DDA HR would be available to provide input and guidance on this item.

ASSURANCE

Recruiting local government leaders is increasingly complex due to factors such as demographic shifts, the perception and attractiveness of public service careers, compensation and benefits, the political and organizational environment, evolving workforce expectations, and geographic or lifestyle considerations.

To address these challenges, DDA HR offers assurances that reflect our commitment to your satisfaction and confidence in our ability to secure the right candidate. Our goal remains unchanged: to deliver the best possible candidates through a thorough, transparent, and results-driven process.

Under this Full-Service Executive Search model, if the newly hired City Administrator leaves the organization for any reason within the first 12 months of employment, DDA HR will conduct one additional search at no professional service fee; the City will only be responsible for an expense charge of \$5,000.*

Additionally, every Full-Service Executive Search includes one year of leadership development mentoring provided by our dedicated mentor, Bart Fischer. This program includes ten monthly in-person or virtual sessions, along with on-call support, to help your new City Administrator successfully navigate their first year, build strong relationships, and deliver results for your organization and community.*

**The organization's eligibility for the one-year guarantee is contingent upon the new City Administrator's attendance at a minimum of 7/10 of the scheduled leadership development mentoring sessions.*

REFERENCES

Charlotte Gabler

Councilor, City of Monticello

City Administrator Search

Phone Number: 612-669-8120

Email: charlotte.gabler@ci.monticello.mn.us

Rich Murray

Mayor, City of Albert Lea

Econ. Dev. Executive Director (ALEDA) &

HRA Executive Director Searches

Phone Number: 507-383-1530

Email: rmurray@ci.albertlea.mn.us

ACCEPTANCE

The undersigned acknowledges receipt of and agreement to the terms outlined in this proposal and authorizes DDA Human Resources, Inc. to proceed with the agreed-upon services.

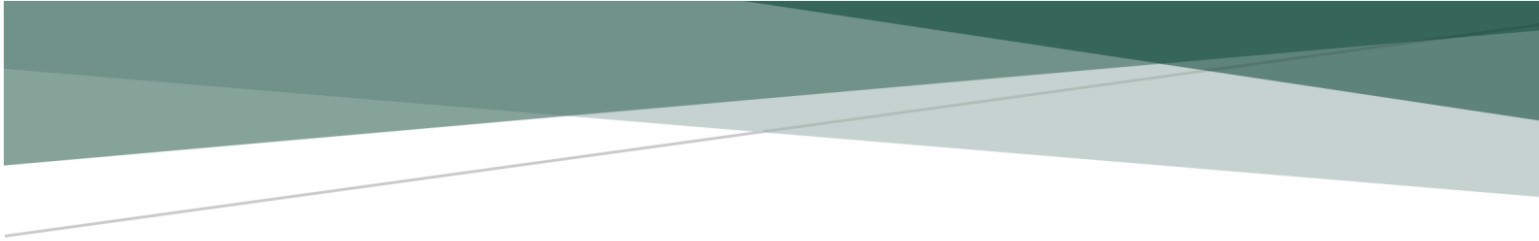
Authorized Representative

Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____



Addendums

Addendum A: Sample Position Profile

Addendum B: Work Personality Index Information

Addendum C: Intellect Profile Information

Addendum D: Additional Services

Additional Services



DDA

Human Resources, Inc.
a David Drown Associates Company

In addition to executive search, DDA Human Resources, Inc. offers other specialized consulting services to help local governments strengthen leadership, improve operations, and enhance workplace culture. Our experienced consultants, who are former city and county leaders, bring practical insight and a tailored approach to each engagement. DDA Human Resources, Inc. is committed to supporting your organization's long-term success through results-driven services that strengthen leadership, enhance operations, and build lasting impact.

STRATEGIC PLANNING & GOAL SETTING

Facilitating alignment, clarity, and action among leadership teams.

Organizations – particularly those experiencing change or new leadership – benefit from setting aside time to align on direction and goals. Our Management Consultants facilitate sessions that bring leadership teams together to build trust, articulate individual and shared priorities, and develop a clear set of strategic objectives. The result is a practical, prioritized roadmap your team can confidently work toward over the next several years.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT MENTORING

Supporting public sector leaders with insight, guidance, and purpose.

DDA HR's Leadership Development Mentoring helps new and current public sector leaders navigate their roles with confidence. Through one-on-one support, we offer trusted advice, help refine leadership and communication skills, and provide guidance aligned with Council/Board goals. This mentoring process fosters clarity, emotional intelligence, and long-term success in public service leadership.

ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS

Enhancing structure, efficiency, and service delivery.

We conduct comprehensive assessments of organizational systems, workflows, and staffing to identify performance gaps and improvement opportunities. Our recommendations are grounded in public sector best practices and tailored to your agency's goals.

PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS

Implementing fair, transparent, and constructive evaluations.

We help organizations develop or refine performance management systems that promote accountability, support employee development, and align with organizational values. Our process fosters a culture of continuous improvement and service excellence.

ELECTED BODY/STAFF RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

Strengthening collaboration between governance and administration.

We support effective working relationships between elected officials and staff by clarifying roles, improving communication protocols, and fostering mutual respect. Our services promote alignment on policy objectives and organizational priorities.

SUCCESSION PLANNING

Ensuring leadership continuity and workforce stability.

DDA HR helps organizations proactively prepare for leadership transitions by identifying future leaders, aligning development efforts, and supporting long-term stability. Our process minimizes disruption and builds internal capacity to sustain high-quality service delivery over time.

Psychometrics

Assessment Description

The Work Personality Index®-Second Edition, an updated version of the Work Personality Index®, is a work-oriented personality inventory that assesses the personal characteristics and tendencies that influence an individual's job performance. Comprised of 198 items rated on 5-point scales, the Work Personality Index®-Second Edition takes approximately 25 minutes to complete. It identifies behaviors that predict work success as well as individual strengths and weaknesses. The assessment is well-suited for use in selection as well as coaching and development.

What the WPI Measures

The WPI assesses 21 personality traits that directly relate to work performance

- Energy
- Ambition
- Leadership
- Social Confidence
- Persuasion
- Initiative
- Flexibility
- Multi-Tasking
- Outgoing
- Teamwork
- Concern for Others
- Democratic
- Dependability
- Persistence
- Rule Following
- Attention to Detail
- Planning
- Innovation
- Analytical Thinking
- Self-Control
- Stress Tolerance
- Management and Leadership Potential (*Select Report Only*)
- Sales Potential (*Select Report Only*)

WPI Reports

Select Report

- Provides results on each scale and supplemented with a narrative explaining the individual's results and their implications for the workplace.

The results on the WPI scales are presented as Sten Scores, which range from 1 to 10 with an average of 5.5. These scores compare the responses on the WPI items to those of a large sample of working adults. The number in the middle of the circle indicates the candidate's score on the scale. The range of scores is shown below.



Elite Intellect Profile



Assessment Description

The Elite Intellect Profile is an assessment of cognitive ability and measures the ability to be trained, solve problems, and comprehend complex relationships. Designed for selection, it is comprised of 40 multiple-choice items and has a 12-minute time limit.

Research from the testing literature regarding intelligence consistently shows that cognitive ability is a valid predictor of job performance, learning ability and training success, across most, if not all, jobs. The Elite Intellect Profile (EIP) helps employers accurately test a candidate's level of general cognitive ability. More specifically, the test measures the individual's potential to be trained, to effectively and efficiently solve problems, to communicate clearly and to comprehend complex relationships.

What the Elite Intellect Profile Measures

- Verbal Reasoning
 - Verbal Reasoning measures the degree to which the individual is likely to understand logical relationships among written or spoken words, including word comprehension and associations. This ability is especially important for jobs requiring quick and fluid thinking and jobs requiring that conclusions be drawn from moderate to complex verbal or written communications.
- Mathematical and Logical Reasoning
 - Mathematical and Logical Reasoning measures the degree to which the individual is likely to reason logically and to understand and solve basic to more complex mathematical, logical and abstract problems. While research has shown that logical reasoning is important for most jobs, this ability is especially critical for jobs requiring analytical problem solving
- Overall Mental Aptitude

Elite Intellect Profile Report

The candidate's raw and norm-based percentile score on each scale is reported and supplemented with extensive interpretive information. Also included in the report are the IQ equivalency scores for the Total Score and the degree of fit between the Total Score and the job the individual is applying for with respect to the intellectual requirements of the job.

Elite Intellect Profile is a copyright and mark owned solely by PsyMetrics, Inc.



Request for Council Action

SUBJECT: **Approval of Contract with Ellen Hiniker and Hiniker Consulting LLC for Interim City Administrator Services**

MEETING DATE: January 12, 2026
ITEM TYPE: Regular Business
CONTACT: Bridget Nason, City Attorney

ACTION REQUESTED

Council is asked to approve a contract with Ellen Hiniker and Hiniker Consulting LLC for Interim City Administrator Services.

BACKGROUND

City Council interviewed candidates for the Interim City Administrator position on Monday, January 5, 2026. Upon consensus of the council, Ellen Hiniker was selected as the candidate for the position. Council instructed City Attorney to draft a contract and bring forward the contract for approval at this special meeting.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATION

The City Attorney recommends execution of the contract for City Administrator Services with Ellen Hiniker and Hiniker Consulting.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Interim City Administrator Contract

INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR AGREEMENT FOR INTERIM CITY ADMINISTRATOR

THIS INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR AGREEMENT FOR INTERIM CITY ADMINISTRATOR ('Agreement') is made effective as of the 12th day of January, 2026 ("Effective Date") by and between the City of Inver Grove Heights, a Minnesota municipal corporation (the "City"), and Hiniker Consulting LLC, a Minnesota limited liability company (hereinafter "Contractor").

RECITALS

WHEREAS, the City desires to retain the services of Contractor for an interim period of time for purposes of performing duties generally performed by the city administrator; and

WHEREAS, Ellen Hiniker, Contractor's designated personnel, has the necessary specialized skill, experience, education and training to provide professional services to the City in the capacity of Interim City Administrator, and Contractor can and desires to provide such services to the City, and

WHEREAS, City desires to procure from Contractor professional services provided by Ellen Hiniker as Interim City Administrator.

NOW, THEREFORE for good and valuable consideration, including the mutual promises and agreements contained in this Agreement, the receipt and sufficiency of which is acknowledged, the parties agree as follows:

1. Term and Renewal.

This Agreement shall commence on the Effective Date as written above and shall continue in full force and effect until it is terminated by either party giving to the other party thirty (30) days' written notice of intent to terminate, with or without cause. Notwithstanding the foregoing, this Agreement shall automatically terminate nine months from the Effective Date unless terminated by either party earlier (in accordance with the previous sentence) or unless the parties hereto mutually agree to a written extension.

2. Services.

Beginning on January 13, 2026, Contractor's personnel Ellen Hiniker shall act as the Interim City Administrator during the term of this Agreement and during that time shall be responsible to the City Council as set forth in City Code, the Interim City Administrator job description provided to Contractor, those services typically performed by a City Administrator, and this Agreement, along with other duties as assigned by the City Council. The City Council may identify certain priorities for Contractor consistent with the interim, temporary nature of the position.

The parties agree that, to the fullest extent allowed by law, Contractor's personnel, while acting as the Interim City Administrator shall be deemed to be an officer of the City, as set forth in Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 466, and shall be entitled to the immunities and protections available to officers in Chapter 466.

Services provided to the City under this Agreement shall be provided exclusively by Ellen Hiniker on behalf of the Contractor. This Agreement, being intended to secure the personal services of Contractor's designated personnel, shall not be assigned, sublet or transferred without the written consent of the City.

In providing services hereunder, the Contractor shall abide by all statutes, ordinances, rules and regulations, including all non-discrimination laws, pertaining to the provisions of services to be provided. Any violation shall constitute a material breach of this Agreement and entitle the City to immediately terminate this Agreement notwithstanding other termination provisions contained herein.

3. Representations; Independent Contractor Status.

Contractor agrees that all work performed by them under this Agreement shall be performed in a professional matter, using Contractor's best efforts, in a manner consistent with the level of care and skill ordinarily exercised by professional consultants currently providing similar services.

Contractor also understands and acknowledges that they are an independent contractor and not an employee of the City, and that they will be responsible for paying for all necessary and appropriate taxes, unemployment premiums, and the like, which will be owed as a result of sums paid by the City to Contractor under this Agreement. Contractor further understands and warrants that they will not be entitled to receive benefits provided by the City to its employees, including, but not limited to, health, life, or disability insurance, PERA, paid time off, paid holidays, ESST, or other benefits. Contractor waives the right to sue the City for any worker's compensation benefits. For the avoidance of doubt, all services performed by the Contractor pursuant to this Agreement shall be provided as an independent contractor and not as an employee of the City for any purpose, including but not limited to: income tax withholding, workers' compensation, retirement opportunities, unemployment compensation, FICA taxes, liability for torts and eligibility for employee benefits.

4. Fees/Hours of Work.

City agrees to pay Contractor at a rate of \$100 per hour (billed in increments of one-quarter hour or portion thereof) for all professional services performed under this Agreement, paid every month following receipt of proper invoices. Travel to and from work will not be counted as time worked; however, travel within Inver

Grove Heights or other travel in connection with job duties shall be billed as time worked and reimbursed at the current IRS mileage reimbursement rate.

The City and Contractor anticipate that Contractor will not exceed 40 hours of service to the City per week, and will generally consist of between 20 and 35 hours per week during normal office hours of the City together with attendance at evening City Council and Economic Development Authority meetings, as well as other City meetings as required.

In addition to the meeting attendance detailed above, Contractor will be generally available to work Monday through Friday between 9 am until 4:30 p.m. on each workday. Contractor is expected to work at City Hall between those hours Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays; Contractor may otherwise work remotely when appropriate and such hours will be identified as such when invoiced to the City.

Contractor shall not be prohibited from working as an independent contractor and providing services to other entities during the term of this Agreement, provided that Contractor shall be available to provide the required services under this Agreement to the City.

5. Tax Payments.

Contractor acknowledges and agrees to be fully and completely responsible for all appropriate self-employment tax payments as required by law, as well as Social Security and all other required tax payments. The City shall provide Contractor with tax forms, showing all payments made by the City to Contractor.

6. Office and Equipment.

The City will provide to Contractor a furnished office located at Inver Grove Heights City Hall, together with phone, e-mail, and internet service and the assistance of existing staff. The City will provide or help facilitate Contractor's ability to work remotely from their residence.

7. Insurance

The Contractor, at its expense, shall procure and maintain in force for the duration of this Agreement the following minimum insurance coverages:

- A. General Liability. The Contractor shall maintain Commercial General Liability Insurance in a minimum amount of \$1,000,000 per occurrence; \$2,000,000 annual aggregate. The policy shall cover liability arising from premises, operations, products-completed operations, personal injury, advertising injury, and contractually assumed liability. The City, including its

elected and appointed officials, employees, and agents, shall be endorsed as additional insured.

- B. Automobile Liability. If the Contractor operates a motor vehicle in performing the Services under this Agreement, the Contractor shall maintain Business Automobile Liability Insurance, including owned, hired, and non-owned automobiles, with a minimum combined single liability limit of \$1,000,000 per occurrence.
- C. Professional (Errors and Omissions) Liability Insurance. The Contractor shall maintain professional liability insurance for all claims the Contractor may become legally obligated to pay resulting from any actual or alleged negligent act, error, or omission related to Contractor's professional services required under this Agreement. The Contractor is required to carry the following minimum limits: \$1,000,000 per occurrence; \$2,000,000 annual aggregate. The retroactive or prior acts date of such coverage shall not be after the effective date of this Agreement and the Contractor shall maintain such insurance for a period of at least two (2) years, following completion of the Services. If such insurance is discontinued, extended reporting period coverage must be obtained by the Contractor to fulfill this requirement.
- D. Workers' Compensation. The Contractor shall provide Workers' Compensation insurance for all its employees in accordance with the statutory requirements of the State of Minnesota. The Contractor shall also carry Employers' Liability Coverage with minimum limits as follows:
 - \$500,000 – Bodily Injury by Disease per employee
 - \$500,000 – Bodily Injury by Disease aggregate
 - \$500,000 – Bodily Injury by Accident
- E. Additional Insurance Conditions. The insurance requirements may be met through any combination of primary and umbrella/excess insurance. The City must be endorsed as an additional insured on any umbrella/excess policy. The Contractor's policies shall be primary insurance and non-contributory to any other valid and collectible insurance available to the City with respect to any claim arising out of the Contractor's performance under this Agreement. The Contractor's policies and Certificate of Insurance shall contain a provision that coverage afforded under the policies shall not be cancelled without at least thirty (30) days' advanced written notice to the City, or ten (10) days' written notice for non-payment of premium

8. Indemnification.

The Contractor agrees to indemnify, defend and hold the City harmless from any and all liability, loss, damage, cost, and expense, including reasonable attorneys'

fees and costs to which the City may become subject as a result of any claim or lawsuit brought by a third party to the extent arising from the Contractor's negligent performance pursuant to this Agreement or willful misconduct. Likewise, the City agrees to indemnify, defend and hold the Contractor harmless from any and all liability, loss, damage, cost, and expense, including reasonable attorneys' fees and costs to which the Contractor may become subject as a result of any claim or lawsuit brought by a third party to the extent arising from the City's negligent performance pursuant to this Agreement or willful misconduct. Nothing contained herein shall be interpreted as a waiver by either party of any statutory liability limits afforded under the law nor shall any indemnification requirements contained herein be interpreted to exceed such limits.

9. Governing Law/Jurisdiction

This Agreement is made and entered into in the State of Minnesota and shall be governed and construed in accordance with the laws of Minnesota, without regard to its conflict of laws and principles. The parties also agree that any dispute between the parties shall be resolved in Dakota County District Court, and each party consents to the exercise of personal jurisdiction by the courts of Minnesota.

10. Non-Waiver

The waiver by a party of a breach of any provision of this Agreement shall not operate to waive any subsequent breach or as a waiver of any other provision of this Agreement.

11. Notices.

All notices, requests, and demands given to or made pursuant to this Agreement shall be in writing and personally delivered or mailed, postage prepaid, as follows:

To City: City of Inver Grove Heights
Attn: Amy Hove, Finance Director
8150 Barbara Ave.
Inver Grove Heights, MN 55077

To Contractor: Hiniker Consulting LLC
ATTN: Ellen Hiniker
6213 Land Trail
Inver Grove Heights, MN 55076

12. Complete Agreement: Modification

This Agreement represents the entire agreement of the parties, and no representations have been made or relied upon except as set forth herein. Any modification of this Agreement shall be ineffective and unenforceable unless it is in writing and signed by both parties.

13. Conflict of Interest.

Contractor covenants that it presently has no interest and shall not acquire any interest, direct or indirect, which would conflict in any manner or degree with the performance of its services pursuant to this Agreement.

14. Data Practices; Audit.

Data provided, produced or obtained under this Agreement, shall be administered in accordance with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Minnesota Statutes Chapter 13. Contractor will immediately report to the City any requests from third parties for information relating to this Agreement. Contractor agrees to promptly respond to inquiries from the City concerning data requests.

Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 16C.05, Subd. 5, Contractor must allow the City, or its duly authorized agents, and the state auditor or legislative auditor reasonable access to any books, records, documents, and accounting procedures and practices that are pertinent to all services provided under this Agreement for a minimum of six years from the termination of this Agreement.

[signature page to follow]

Both parties are in agreement of the above contract and have caused it to take effect by their signatures below.

CITY OF INVER GROVE HEIGHTS, MN

By: _____
Mayor

BY: _____
City Clerk

CONTRACTOR
HINIKER CONSULTING LLC

By: _____
Ellen Hiniker
Its: _____