

STANDARD AGREEMENT & ENGAGEMENT LETTER FOR MUNICIPAL ADVISORY SERVICES

David Drown Associates, Inc. ("Municipal Advisor") has been selected to serve as the Municipal Advisor for Issuers participating in the Micro, Midi and Mega Loan programs (the "Program"). By submitting a signed Minnesota Rural Water Association Loan Application Form (the "Application") for a Program Loan and by approving a Resolution providing for the sale of Bonds through the Program, you are designating David Drown Associates, Inc. to serve as the Municipal Advisor for the loan. This document is our written arrangement on the role the Municipal Advisor will serve and responsibilities the Municipal Advisor will assume in connection with the issuance of general obligation bonds by the Issuer (the "Loan") as described in the Application completed by the Issuer and also the fees the Municipal Advisor will charge.

Section 1: Municipal Advisor Role. The Municipal Advisor is engaged as a recognized independent expert whose primary responsibility is to give objective fiscal advice on the structure and issuance of the Loan under state and federal securities law. We will provide some, or all, of the following services to determine suitability of the Loan for the applicant:

- a. Evaluate legal options/alternatives for issuance of debt taking into account borrower's objectives, revenue availability and other factors.
- b. Prepare preliminary financing schedules and options for review and consideration by the Borrower.
- c. Evaluate the suitability of Program loans to meet borrower's objectives and advise the borrower of other suitable alternatives.
- d. Upon receipt of a completed Application, the Municipal Advisor will prepare final payment and cashflow schedules and related offering documents.
- e. For certain Mega loans, prepare application materials and assist the borrower in securing a bond rating.
- f. Secure a binding commitment for the sale/placement of the loan with pre-screened program lenders and/or other underwriters or lenders as necessary.
- g. Work with bond counsel to prepare a Resolution and other documents necessary to finalize and close the loan.
- h. Provide assistance in coordinating closing and transfer of funds.
- i. Draft a closing letter summarizing the transaction and providing guidance in accounting for loan proceeds and budgeting for future payments.

Section 2: Engagement Letter & Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest. Rules established by the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board ("MSRB") and the Securities Exchange Commission ("SEC") requires the registered Municipal Advisor tasked with administering the various low cost loan programs offered via MN Rural Water Association ("MRWA"), to provide a written description of its advisory relationship and to make certain other disclosures in regards to potential conflicts of interest. The applicant recognizes that by submitting the attached application that it has requested and approved David Drown Associates, Inc. ("DDA") to act as Municipal Advisor to the community on this particular engagement. This means that DDA is to be held to the very highest standard of loyalty and care with an **explicit fiduciary duty** to act in your community's best interests. This means several important things:

- DDA has a duty to exercise due care in performing municipal advisory activities.
- DDA has a duty of loyalty, requiring us to act in your best interest without regard to our own financial or other interests.
- DDA must have the knowledge and expertise needed to provide you with informed advice.
- DDA has a duty understand you and your specific situation and to follow your directions, so our advice is suitable for you.
- DDA is required to make reasonably inquiries and investigations as to the facts supporting our recommendations and work products.
- DDA has a duty to discuss with you material risks, benefits, and alternatives considered that might serve your interests better.

Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest: A municipal advisor may not undertake an engagement without disclosing in writing how *potential* conflicts of interest will be managed and mitigated. There are several potential conflicts of interest that may apply to our engagement with you:

Compensation Conflicts of Interest.

- ☐ Fixed Fees or "Lump Sum". This form of compensation represents a potential conflict of interest because if the transaction requires more work than originally contemplated, the financial advisor may suffer a loss. Thus, the advisor may recommend less time-consuming alternatives or fail to do a full analysis of alternatives.
- ☐ Fee Based upon Principal Amount. This form of compensation presents a conflict of interest because the advisor may have an incentive to advise the client to increase the size of the securities issue for the purpose of increasing the advisor's compensation.
- ☐ Contingent Fee. This form of compensation presents a potential conflict of interest because the advisor may have an incentive to recommend unnecessary financings or financings that are disadvantageous to the client. When facts or circumstances arise that could cause the financing to be delayed or fail to close, an advisor may have an incentive to discourage a full consideration of such facts and circumstances.

Our plan to mitigate conflicts of interest regarding compensation is to assure the program standard fee schedule reasonably reflects the expected costs of standard services.

MN Rural Water Association Conflicts of Interest. David Drown Associates, Inc. serves as the financial advisor for MRWA's MEGA, MIDI, MICRO and Interim Funding Programs. In that capacity, we process loan requests and serve as municipal advisor to borrowers seeking to utilize these funding programs. This relationship with MRWA represents a potential conflict of interest in that we have an incentive to recommend the use of these funding programs and to exclude due consideration of other options or alternatives. We have mitigated this conflict of interest by agreement with MRWA that we will not process loans where other financing mechanisms are clearly superior, and we maintain internal procedures that explicitly include a review of other funding options before acting upon a loan request.

Section 3: Term of Engagement. Upon closing and delivery of closing, our responsibilities as Municipal Advisor will be concluded with respect to this financing and we do not undertake (unless separately engaged) to provide continuing advice to you or any other party.

Section 4: Fees & Expenses. The Municipal Advisor's fees will be incorporated into and paid from the Program Fee shown on the Application Form. Our fee shall be contingent upon successful sale and closing of a Loan (see disclosure of conflicts of interest above). In the event we are asked to provide additional services outside the scope of Program activities, we will notify you of these services and costs in advance.

CERTIFICATION OF ENGAGEMENT

By submitting a signed application, the applicant hereby certifies that David Drown Associates, Inc. is hereby engaged to serve as our community's Municipal Advisor associated with the attached loan application. It is further certified that DDA has fully and completely disclosed all potential conflicts of interest and the plans to mitigate such conflicts. We understand that DDA will investigate our financial position to determine the suitability of the loan programs for our project. We understand and accept any findings that determine the loan programs may be unsuitable for our community or if more beneficial financing alternatives may be suggested.

