

## TRIBAL BROADBAND FEASIBILITY STUDY REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

### INTRODUCTION

\_\_\_\_\_ Tribe is seeking proposals for a broadband feasibility/engineering study. The purpose of this RFP is to provide the Tribe with the information needed to analyze, select and implement the best solutions to improve broadband connectivity across our entire tribe so that our network(s) are an asset for community and economic development. The Tribe recognizes reaching our goal may require a mix of technologies and phased build-out plans. Flexibility, ingenuity and innovation along with a cohesiveness in design will be necessary to reach the ultimate goal of digitally connecting the Tribal entities through a world-class, next generation network.

Our vision:

All \_\_\_\_\_ Tribe residents will be able to use convenient, affordable world-class broadband networks that enable us to survive and thrive in our communities and across the globe.

To achieve this vision, we seek the best path to a ubiquitous broadband network that is ultimately scalable to **one Gigabit** to homes, businesses and anchor institutions recognizing that this may require a **10 Gigabit** backbone. We recognize that there are a variety of models that could be used to achieve our vision and we are open to all of them, including incenting private sector investment, engaging in a public-private partnership, forming a new cooperative or operating as a government\ tribal utility.

We expect this to be a highly interactive and iterative process, with excellent and ongoing communications between the selected vendor and the tribal committee so that at the end of the study process, the committee clearly understands the best alternatives for moving forward to achieve connectivity.

### DESCRIPTION OF \_\_\_\_\_ TRIBE

Key geographic and demographic information

Road miles

Average population density

Average rural population density

A map of the tribe is attached.

### TRIBAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE FEASIBILITY STUDY PROJECT

To support the selected vendor, the tribe will, at a minimum, provide the following:

- Recruitment of a project steering team
- Recruitment of focus group participants
- Access to tribal GIS data
- Access to historical Tribal Permit Data
- Other public information as needed

## SCOPE OF WORK/REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

This section outlines the study and report requirements.

### Section A – Current assessment and market demand

- Review of the competitive environment tribe
  - o Complete an inventory of existing fiber networks within the tribe, including ownership and availability for use by other network providers.
  - o Provide an overview of current broadband providers' services, pricing strategies and coverage area. To the extent possible, determine and analyze the investment and deployment plans of incumbent providers.
  - o Map existing the location of existing fiber and broadband-related electronics and available broadband speeds available by provider. This information should be provided in a format usable by the tribal GIS systems.
  - o Provide an assessment of the services available to our existing and prospective businesses and how that impacts our economic development efforts.
  
- Provide a market study to establish a likely market penetration rate and clarify which benefits from a new reservation\ community wide network might be most important to the residents and businesses. Include information from the following sources
  - o Available market and census data
  - o Local random sample reservation\ community survey of residents and businesses
  - o Focus groups of key constituencies
  - o Include a sample survey your firm has used for similar project and the resulting report as an appendix of your proposal

### Section B – Technology options

- Determine the best technology path for our tribe
  - o What are the broadband capacities and considerations that are necessary now and in the future that will enable our tribe to be economically competitive? What technologies can provide broadband services at those speeds?
  - o What are the technologies best suited to the various areas of the reservation\ community based on geography and demographics?
  - o What opportunities exist to provide a protected-ring fiber network that would connect businesses and anchor institutions such as schools, libraries, hospitals, public safety, cities, institutions of higher education and community support organizations?
  
- Options for services provision to include:
  - o Mix of technologies and phased build out plans with multiple platforms scalable to 1 gigabit and include wireless, fiber, ARMER towers, cable, etc.
  - o Options should include scenarios using what already exists within the tribe, with a minimum service level of (25/3, 100/100, Gb (tribe must choose)).
  - o Business models and pro forma to be analyzed to include but not be limited to:

- a) Build on existing networks: Options to combine or collaborate with existing providers to provide middle and last mile coverage to the underserved and unserved, with special emphasis on leveraging CAF2 dollars.
- b) Create new networks:
  1. Open Access: The tribe would finance and contract to build the network and invite other service providers to contract to deliver services over the network.
  2. Proprietary Network:
    - i. The Tribe would build and operate the network, with or without private sector operating partners
    - ii. The Tribe would incentivise a private sector partner, including existing cooperatives, the creation of a new cooperative, or other entity to invest, build and operate a network by using development powers as necessary.
  3. Other options that might involve multiple local entities or other scenarios as a contractor sees appropriate.
- Conduct pre-engineering study(s) at sufficient depth to estimate costs and approximate implementation timeframes for full network implementation.
  - o This evaluation should include an assessment of all available mainstream high-speed technologies either alone or in combination and include an assessment and consideration of both Fiber to the Premise (FTTP) and wireless technologies. All parts, materials, and service proposed must be currently available on the market and in continuing production (no discontinued manufacturers or parts).
  - o Assessment of primary and redundant backhaul connection options between local network and the Internet.
  - o Define the proposed service area and create a conceptual fiber route and high level design to provide the greatest coverage, showing businesses and publicly owned facilities passed within ½ mile on both sides of the fiber route.
  - o Use algorithmic tools to combine the map data with historical cost data to provide an estimated cost to offer scalable broadband service for all options identified. Costs will be calculated by service area and anticipated route miles to determine capital costs for fiber optic mainline, access equipment, cell tower backhaul, routers, and switches. Costs should be all inclusive of any design, initial configuration and installation costs.

#### Section C – Partnership options

- Provide examples of who might be a prospective partner with a brief summary of how each relationship would function.
- What sectors, groups and individuals may help our tribe achieve the broadband goals? Please identify synergies and sharing opportunities that exist with providers and customers to include but not limited to:
  - o ISP Providers, Telecoms, Cooperatives, Statewide telecom networks, Government entities, NGO's, K-12 and higher education, including library systems, Healthcare providers and the industry and business community

#### Section D – Financing and Legal Considerations

- Provide financing options to include, but not limited to grants, general obligation bonds, revenue bonds, public/private partnerships, USDA RUS, other state and federal funding and others where appropriate or applicable .
- Provide an assessment of legal requirements, risks and regulations relevant to the building or operation of a network and partnership arrangements.
- Prepare financial projections for at least two project scenarios as selected by the project steering team:
  - o Options Identified
  - o Operational Cash flow for expenditures
  - o One Time and Recurring Capital Expenses
  - o Business and technical expertise needed
  - o Organizational support
  - o Community Support

#### PROPOSED SCHEDULE

- All proposals due at **4:30 pm CST on (date TBD)**.
- Project implementation schedule and phasing - Please provide an estimated project timeline. Timeline should include:
  - o Estimated project start and end dates.
  - o Proposed date(s) for pre-project meeting with the tribe's feasibility study project committee.
  - o Proposed dates for conducting a community presentation to collect public input and review preliminary findings.
  - o Proposed date for presentation to Tribal Council .
- Consultant will provide biweekly updates on progress during the work period to the Tribal Council.
- Consultant will provide fifteen copies of final feasibility study along with a digital copy

#### REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The following will be considered “minimal contents” of the proposal. Limit proposal to 10 pages.

1. Provide a restatement of the goals, objectives and project tasks to demonstrate the responder's view of the project and your approach to this project. Please reference the Study/Report Requirements: Sections A – D in your responses.
2. Provide on your background and experience in the following areas:
  - a. Network: Outline the direct knowledge and experience your company has regarding broadband solutions.
  - b. Financial: Describe direct experience and knowledge your company has creating and analyzing financial plans and models including capital requirements, operational pro formas, and financing options.
  - c. Regulatory/Legal: Describe any direct experience and knowledge your company has in analyzing and interpreting the regulatory and legal landscape and providing analysis and guidance on these issues as they pertain to the various options contained in the proposal.

- d. Services: Describe any direct experience and knowledge your company has in providing community and business community analysis and guidance surrounding broadband services.
- e. Project Management: Outline your company's direct knowledge and experience with structured project management.
- f. Partnerships: Share your company's experience in working with tribal, state, and local governments and public-private sector collaborations.

3. Conflicts of Interest: Provide any information on prospective conflicts of interests, including existing or financial relations with equipment vendors, ISPs or other firms.

4. References: Include at least three references from previous similar projects. Identify key personnel who will conduct the project and provide detail of their training and work experience. No change in key personnel assigned to the project will be allowed without the approval of the local project team. Address experience in working with tribes, rural communities, schools and townships in regard to this type of study.

Note: Subcontractors working for the contractor must meet all the requirements of the Request for Proposal (RFP) and any contract between the contractor and the subcontractor must include all contract terms agreed to between the Tribe and the successful contractor.

5. Detailed work plan to include:
  - a. Tasks to be accomplished and the budget hours to be expended for each task and subtask. (This will be used as a work plan and managing tool for the basis of invoicing.)
  - b. Identify project timeline with deliverables and key milestones.
  - c. Provide detail regarding local involvement and services expected to complete the project. A minimum of 3 status meetings are to be contained in the work plan in addition to any data collection or input/review meetings.
  - d. Outline the project management approach that your company will employ to execute this project and identify individual(s) responsible for the various areas in the outline.
  - e. Identify areas of risk for the project based on the contractor's detailed work plan and schedule for all aspects of the project including but not limited to financial, construction, legal, product availability, environmental and archaeological.
  - f. Provide detailed cost estimates of the study, including known project expenses, professional hourly rates and multipliers and estimated service/task hours with a "Not to Exceed" cap. Other ancillary expenses related to the completion of the study will be discussed on a case-by-case basis.
  - g. Commit to working closely with Tribal Council and community

#### EVALUATION CRITERIA

The local project team\tribe will likely evaluate all proposals using the following criteria to conduct a best value evaluation:

- Experience and qualifications of the vendor and personnel assigned to this project
- Clear understanding of this project

- Clear technical proficiency for the mix of technologies and cohesiveness of the network proposed
- Project work plan and timeline
- Work experience in small and rural communities including tribe, counties, cities and townships
- Pricing

## SELECTION

After evaluating all proposals, the Tribal Council may choose to interview the top candidates. Selection of the consultant for this project will likely be based on the criteria noted above. Upon approval from the council, the tribe may enter into negotiations with the selected consultant to develop a Professional Services Agreement and finalize the work plan including budget hours. Should the tribe and the selected consultant fail to satisfactorily reach agreement to the work plan, including budget, the tribe may enter into negotiations with the respondent judged second in the evaluation process, or the tribe may re-advertise for proposals.

The tribe reserves the right to reject any and all proposals regardless of merit.

## RFP TIMELINE

Release RFP	Day 1
Questions due to _____ Tribe	Day 21
_____ Tribal responses provided	Day 30
Proposals due	Day 45
Interviews, if necessary	Day 60
Approval of contract by Tribal Council	Day 75

Any proposal related questions should be emailed to (project coordinator email )

The above dates are subject to change at the discretion of \_\_\_\_\_ Tribe.

Please email your proposal to (key contact).

## PRIMARY CONTACTS

Name

Title

Address

Phone

Email