

## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

### **Colorado Central Plains Regional Broadband Strategic Plan**

The East Central Council of Local Governments (ECCOG) is requesting proposals from qualified firms or individuals to assist ECCOG staff and a Broadband Committee staff in the development of a Regional Strategic Plan for Broadband for a four-county area in Colorado's Central Plains: Elbert, Lincoln, Kit Carson and Cheyenne counties.

It is anticipated that this project will be supported in part by an Energy and Mineral Impact Assistance Fund (EIAF) grant awarded through the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA).

Proposals will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 19, 2014. Proposals may be delivered via mail, in person, or via e-mail:

**East Central Council of Local Governments  
Attn: Jo Downey, Executive Director  
PO Box 28 128 Colorado Avenue  
Stratton, CO 80836  
jdowney@prairiedevelopment.com**

Only proposals received (not postmarked) by the deadline will be accepted. No proposals which are received after the time and date stated above will be considered, and any proposals so received after the scheduled closing time and date mentioned above shall be returned to the submitting firm unopened. Hand carried proposals must be delivered to the ECCOG street address shown above.

The contract will be made with ECCOG and ECCOG will award the contract based on the evaluation criteria contained in the RFP.

The East Central Council of Local Governments reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, to waive informalities and to reserve any RFP's. ECCOG also reserves the right to award the contract as it deems will best serve its interests.

Published: April 17, 2014

Jo Downey  
Executive Director, ECCOG

## **REQUIREMENTS**

RFP Name: Colorado Central Plains Regional Strategic Plan for Broadband

### **TERMS**

The following terms will apply to this RFP and to any subsequent contract. Submission of a proposal in response to this RFP indicates acceptance of all the following terms:

- a. "Contract" means the written agreement resulting from this RFP executed by the East Central Council of Local Governments and the Contractor;
- b. "Contractor", or "Provider" means the successful Applicant to this RFP who enters into a written Contract with the East Central Council of Local Governments;
- c. "ECCOG" means the East Central Council of Local Governments;
- d. "Region" means the participating jurisdictions in East Central Colorado which consists of Elbert, Lincoln, Kit Carson and Cheyenne Counties and the incorporated municipalities within each county;
- e. "Firm", "Proposer", "Vendor", or "Bidder" means an individual or a company that submits, or intends to submit, a proposal in response to this "RFP";

### **SCOPE OF SERVICE AND GENERAL CONDITIONS**

1. Services shall be provided as requested by ECCOG in compliance with the Scope of Services as described in this RFP.
2. The Provider shall maintain such records as are deemed necessary pursuant to any DOLA EIAF grant and ECCOG rules to assure a proper accounting for all costs and funds collected. These records shall be submitted for audit purposes to ECCOG. The Provider shall submit financial, program progress and other reports as requested by ECCOG.
3. Information provided by ECCOG shall be used only for purposes intended and in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations.

### **SERVICE DESCRIPTION**

The East Central Council of Local Governments is seeking a Contractor to assist ECCOG staff in developing a four-county strategic plan for broadband.

The participating jurisdictions include: 1) all of the ECCOG members, which include Elbert, Lincoln, Kit Carson and Cheyenne Counties and the incorporated municipalities within each of the four counties.

The plan will primarily address high-speed internet services from all provider types, and will include wireline, fixed wireless, mobile wireless, and emergency management communications systems.

The development of a strategic plan addresses the need to coordinate multiple private and public efforts towards a common goal of improving broadband capability within the region. Specifically, the plan calls for: 1) an assessment of needs, both infrastructure and services, through surveys, public meetings, and asset mapping; 2) educational workshops to ensure that the participants have the information needed on regulations, economics, and technology to develop a realistic plan; 3) identification of public and private projects already underway to address these needs; 4) identification of gaps in the network and a strategy to fill these gaps, including cost estimates; and 5) address sustainability and maintenance of the network into the future. These steps will ensure that the region builds on statewide efforts already underway in a coordinated approach to improving broadband in the region.

ECCOG will convene a Broadband Steering Committee that will consist of one representative from each county that will serve as the point person for their county and work with ECCOG staff and the Contractor in identifying the appropriate stakeholders for meetings, workshops, or discussions regarding items related to that county. The Steering Committee will have representation from the following sectors: Business, Agriculture, Health Care Providers, K-12, Higher Ed, Local Government/Public Agencies, Libraries and Emergency Management. The Committee will also have at least two members (but no more than five) representative of broadband providers. The Steering Committee will meet periodically to help oversee and direct the project. ECCOG staff will serve as the Project Manager and Project Coordinator.

## **SCOPE OF WORK**

The Vendor shall draft and submit a Scope of Work that his/her firm believes will be required to accomplish the project. At a minimum, the Scope of Work will address the following:

- Work with ECCOG staff to specifically identify the components of the strategic plan document.
- Consult with the State Office of Information Technology as to the components of the strategic plan document.
- Work with ECCOG staff to identify all of the required meetings, workshops, and tasks necessary to complete the plan document. Meetings within the region could be numerous and often held in the evening.
- Take the lead on all necessary data collection.
- Attend all steering committee meetings.
- Facilitate all community specific meetings and workshops.
- Responsible for developing all of the content for the regional strategic plan document.

## **RFP REQUIREMENTS**

Vendor must respond to the following:

1. A cover letter stating the name, address and telephone number of the proposing Vendor. This letter must bear the signature of the person having the authority to make the proposal for the firm.

2. Individual or Company Overview:

- \* A descriptive background/history.
- \* State principal business location and any other service locations.
- \* What is your primary line of business?
- \* How long have you been providing services?
- \* State how many locations where your services are now in use.
- \* Are you a single source provider, or will subcontractors also be used?

3. Qualifications/Professional Competence/Training:

Vendor must provide qualifications as well as experience information on key personnel.

Vendor should list any similar projects.

Vendor must submit a list of all employees that will be associated with the contract.

4. References:

Vendor must provide the names and telephone numbers of at least three references.

5. Cost of Services:

Vendor will provide cost of service. The program has a committed dollar amount to be spent on the plan. The Vendor should detail and itemize, as much as possible, costs for each part of the plan that he/she is proposing. Vendor should be sure to include adequate costs within its budget for extensive travel throughout the region.

## **INNOVATION & COMMENT**

Vendor may include any other information that is believed to be relevant but is not specifically asked for in this RFP. Vendor may explain in detail any innovation, alternatives, or more cost-effective approaches available in any area of the RFP. Vendor may provide suggestions of other products or services available that may assist the region.

## **PAYMENT**

The ECCOG will approve all payments of funds for this project upon receipt of invoices. Chosen Contractor will invoice the ECCOG every 30 days for work completed to date until completion of contract. ECCOG **ONLY** issues checks on the first Wednesday of each month. All invoices must be in by noon of the preceding Wednesday.

The ECCOG shall not be billed for, and reimbursement shall not be made for, time involved in activities outside of those defined in the Cost of Services.

## **KEY TARGET DATES**

Listed below are the key target dates associated with the project described in this RFP. Dates are approximate and may vary:

04/17/2014	Issue Date of RFP
04/18/2014-5/25/2014	Question Period
05/28/2014	Questions received during the question period will be emailed to all respondents, along with the answers
06/19/2014 by 5:00 p.m. MST	RFP Due Date and Time
07/02//2014	Vendor Selection
09/03/2014	Tentative Contract Award Date*
02/04/2015	Draft Plan Document presented to ECCOG Board in Limon, CO
04/01/2015	Scope of Work to be completed and Final Document Presented
04/31/2015	Contract end date/Grant agreement expiration date

- Vendor Contract will not be issued until a fully executed contract between ECCOG and the Colorado Department of Local Affairs is in effect.

## **VENDOR QUALIFICATIONS**

Proposals will be considered only from Vendors who have experienced personnel and necessary equipment to provide the required services. The ECCOG may request information substantiating the requirements. Failure to provide this information may result in a Vendor's proposal being declared non-responsive.

## **WRITTEN AGREEMENT**

The selected Vendor shall be required to enter into a written agreement with the ECCOG. Signature on the Proposal Cover Sheet shall serve as an acknowledgement that the Vendor is willing to enter into an agreement with the ECCOG if their proposal is accepted.

## **EVALUATION AND CONTRACT AWARD**

The ECCOG shall evaluate and select a Vendor to provide the required services based on the completed proposal responses. The ECCOG shall be the sole judge in determining how the evaluation process shall be conducted and what Vendor shall be considered for award as deemed to be in the best interest of the Region.

## **PREPARATION OF PROPOSALS**

The proposal must be signed by a company representative authorized to bind the Vendor contractually. Failure to read the RFP and these instructions will be at the Vendor's own risk. Corrections and/or modifications received after the closing time specified will not be accepted.

All information submitted in response to this RFP is public after the award and/or contract has been executed with the successful Vendor. If Vendor includes as part of the response to the RFP any information that the Vendor believes to be a trade secret or other privileged or confidential data, the Vendor must supply under separate cover and identify as confidential. Statements that the entire proposal is confidential will not be honored. ECCOG will endeavor to keep that information confidential, separate and apart from the proposal subject to the provisions of the Colorado Open Records Act or order of court.

## **OMISSIONS**

Should the ECCOG omit information from this RFP that is necessary for a clear understanding of the work, or should it appear that various instructions are in conflict,

then the Vendor shall secure written instructions from the ECCOG at least seventy-two (72) hours prior to the time and date of the proposal opening.

### **DEBARMENT**

By submitting this proposal, the Vendor certifies that neither the company nor its principals is presently debarred, suspended, in the process of debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any federal or state department or agency.

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

The ECCOG adheres to a policy of equal opportunity and non-discrimination and will ensure that all Vendors will be treated fairly and equitably throughout the bidding process, including the advertisement, evaluation and selection stages.

### **COST OF DEVELOPING PROPOSALS**

All costs related to the preparation of the proposals and any related activities are the sole responsibility of the Vendor. The ECCOG assumes no liability for any costs incurred by Vendors throughout the entire selection process.

### **PROPOSAL OWNERSHIP**

All proposals, including attachments, supplementary materials, addenda, etc. shall become the property of the ECCOG and will not be returned to the Vendor.

### **ADDITIONAL GENERAL INFORMATION & CLARIFICATION**

For additional information or clarification concerning the services specified in this RFP under Scope of Work, interested parties must submit their questions or comments, in writing via e-mail, to both ECCOG staff members, Jo Downey and Candace Payne: [jdowney@prairiedevelopment.com](mailto:jdowney@prairiedevelopment.com) and [cpayne@prairiedevelopment.com](mailto:cpayne@prairiedevelopment.com) Questions will be received, answered in writing, and sent via e-mail to all firms who received the RFP or expressed interest in accordance with the dates designated in the "KEY TARGET DATES" section of this RFP.

Only one copy of the proposal should be submitted.

### **TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

Late Proposals will not be accepted or considered. It is the responsibility of the vendor to ensure that his/her Proposal is properly delivered to the required authority at the time and place designated in this RFP.

ECCOG will notify unsuccessful vendors in writing or by telephone within approximately ten (10) days following the closing date for receiving Proposals. The ECCOG's silence does not imply any acceptance or rejection of any quotation offer.

Issuance of this RFP does not constitute a commitment by ECCOG to award a contract. ECCOG reserves the right to reject any or all Proposals received in response to this RFP, to waive minor irregularities and informalities in Proposals received, or to cancel this RFP if it is in the best interest of the ECCOG or Region to do so.

The Vendor agrees, if his/her Proposal is accepted by ECCOG, to furnish supplies and/or services in strict accordance with the Proposal specifications and at those prices set forth for each item in said Proposal.

The ECCOG is exempt from federal tax (\*\*\*\*\*), Colorado sales tax (State sales tax exempt no. \*\*-\*\*\*\*\*).

### **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

The ECCOG will analyze information provided by all Vendors. Criteria considered by the ECCOG and Region in ranking the proposed exercise coordination proposals will be as follows:

- |    |   |           |
|----|---|-----------|
| a) | Company Overview                                | 15 Points |
| b) | Qualifications/Professional Competence/Training | 50 Points |
| c) | References                                      | 20 Points |
| d) | Total Cost for Service                          | 15 Points |

TOTAL 100 Points