



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Regional Broadband Strategic Plan

Northeast Colorado Association of Local Governments (NECALG) is requesting proposals from qualified firms or individuals to assist NECALG staff in the development of a Regional Strategic Plan for Broadband for a six county area, which consists of Logan, Morgan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington and Yuma counties.

This project may potentially 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 Monday, June 2, 2014.

Proposals may be delivered via mail, in person, or via e-mail:

Northeast Colorado Association of Local Governments

Attn: HJ Greenwood, Executive Director

231 Main Street, Suite 211

Fort Morgan, CO 80701

hgrnwood@necalg.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 NECALG at the street address shown above.

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

The NECALG reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, to waive informalities and to reserve any RFP's. The NECALG also reserves the right to award the contract as it deems will best serve its interests.

Published: April, 2014

HJ Greenwood

Executive Director, NECALG

REQUIREMENTS

RFP Name: NECALG Region 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 Northeast Colorado Association 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 Northeast Colorado Association of Local Governments;
- c. "NECALG" means the Northeast Colorado Association of Local Governments;
- d. "Region" means the participating jurisdictions in Northeast Colorado, which consists of Logan, Morgan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington and Yuma counties.
- 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 NECALG 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 the DOLA EIAF grant and NECALG rules to assure a proper accounting for all costs and funds collected. These records shall be submitted for audit purposes to NECALG. The Provider shall submit financial, program progress and other reports as requested by NECALG.
3. Information provided by NECALG shall be used only for purposes intended and in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations.

SERVICE DESCRIPTION

NECALG is looking for a Contractor to assist NECALG staff in developing a six-county strategic plan for broadband.

The participating jurisdictions include: 1) all of the NECALG members, which include, Logan, Morgan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington and Yuma counties and most of the municipalities within those counties.

The plan will primarily address high-speed internet services for all businesses and residents in the identified region.

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; 6) identifying and utilizing previous broadband improvement efforts in the region in order to use existing information efficiently without repeating efforts; 7) identify and work with providers of internet service in the region. These steps will ensure that the region builds on statewide efforts already underway in a coordinated approach to improving broadband in the region.

NECALG will convene a steering committee that will consist of one representative from each county. This representative will serve as the point person for their county and work with NECALG staff and the Contractor in identifying the appropriate stakeholders for meetings, workshops, or discussions regarding items related to that county. The Steering Committee will meet periodically to help oversee and direct the project. The NECALG Director will serve as the Project Manager and has the option to serve as or appoint a Project Coordinator. Both the Project Manager and Project Coordinator would report to the NECALG Board of Directors for the purposes of accountability, coordination of efforts, and progress reporting.

GOALS OF THE REGIONAL BROADBAND STRATEGIC PLAN

In as much as NECALG recognizes the benefit of pursuing a Regional Broadband Plan which addresses the following goal:

The NECALG intends to improve broadband in the region with the goal of enhancing economic development, contributing to the high quality of life enjoyed in the region, and to address public safety. NECALG defines improving broadband as having the following qualities:

- A. Affordability – decreasing subscriber cost per Mbps by reducing monthly cost for subscribers at the same level of service or increasing bandwidth without increasing subscriber costs.
- B. Reliability – ensuring service is nearly always available – whether a middle mile line has been cut or the town’s population has tripled because of an event.
- C. Abundant – extending broadband to places it may not currently be available, increasing bandwidth to all subscriber classes where it is available.
- D. Redundant – having two or more diversified paths connecting to the internet ensuring that service will not be disrupted.

The Regional Broadband Plan will pursue this goal by addressing and answering the following key issues:

1. Where are we at with regards to: infrastructure, capacity, coverage and utilization?
2. Where do we need to be in regards to: infrastructure, capacity, coverage and utilization?
3. What do we need to do to get there? Consider: infrastructure, providers, overcoming barriers.
4. How can we achieve economies of scale?

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 NECALG staff and/or steering committee to identify all of the required meetings, workshops, and tasks necessary to complete the plan document.
- Take the lead on all necessary data collection working in coordination with the Governor's Office of Information Technology to ensure that data collection efforts are compatible with state efforts.
- Attend all steering committee meetings.
- Responsible for developing all of the content for the regional broadband plan, outline how plan will be structured
- compile body of work already accomplished by the local technology planning teams and perform an assessment of needs, both infrastructure and services, through surveys, public meetings, and asset mapping of information not already acquired by the team
- facilitate educational workshops and materials to ensure that the participants and or designees have the information needed to develop a realistic plan
- identify public and private projects already underway to address these needs
- identify potential public and private projects that may support the regional plan
- identify and analyze community and business anchor institutions
- identify gaps in the network and a strategy to fill these gaps, including cost estimates and funding sources
- address sustainability and maintenance of the network into the future
- work with each county GIS dept. to document findings and make them available to government entities for their use
- identify the status of each county, make recommendations for specific actions for each county, and how to interconnect the counties
- provide final deliverable, all information collected, and all supporting materials in written and electronic (editable) format as agreed upon by NECALG
- interface with local carriers
- develop one-year, three-year, and five-year action plans
- identify next steps in implementing the regional broadband plan

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.

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

NECALG will approve all payments of funds for this project upon receipt of invoices. Chosen Contractor will invoice the NECALG every 30 days for work completed to date until completion of contract. NECALG shall not be billed for, and reimbursement shall not be made for, time involved in activities outside of those defined in the Cost per Service.

KEY TARGET DATES

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

5/1/2014	Issue Date of RFP
5/1/2014 thru 5/15/2014	Question Period
5/20/2014	Questions received during the question period will be emailed to all respondents, along with the answers
6/2/2014 by 5:00 p.m. MST	RFP Due Date and Time

RFP NOT AWARDED UNTIL COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL AFFAIRS (DOLA) GRANT CONTRACT RECEIVED AND SIGNED BOTH BY DOLA AND NECALG. FUNDING IS NOT GUARUNTEED.

NA	Vendor Selection
NA	Tentative Contract Award Date
11/10/2014	Draft Plan Document presented to NECALG Board of Directors in Fort Morgan, CO
12/15/2014	Scope of Work to be completed and final Document Presented
12/31/2014	Contract end date/Grant agreement expiration date

VENDOR QUALIFICATIONS

Proposals will be considered only from Vendors who have experienced personnel and necessary equipment to provide the required services. NECALG 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 NECALG. Signature on the Proposal Cover Sheet shall serve as an acknowledgement that the Vendor is willing to enter into an agreement with the NECALG if their proposal is accepted.

EVALUATION AND CONTRACT AWARD

NECALG shall evaluate and select a Vendor to provide the required services based on the completed proposal responses. NECALG 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. NECALG 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 NECALG 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 NECALG 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 state department or agency.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

NECALG 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. NECALG 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 NECALG 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 HJ Greenwood, hgrnwood@necalg.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.

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

Issuance of this RFP does not constitute a commitment by NECALG to award a contract. NECALG 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 NECALG to do so.

The Vendor agrees, if his/her Proposal is accepted by NECALG, 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.

NECALG is exempt from federal tax (84-0639906), Colorado sales tax (State sales tax exempt no. 98-01956).

EVALUATION CRITERIA

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

a)	Company Overview	10 Points
b)	Qualifications/Professional Competence/Training	60 Points
c)	References	15 Points
d)	Total Cost for Service	15 Points

TOTAL 100 Points