



## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

### Regional Broadband Strategic Plan

Upper Arkansas Area Council of Governments (UAACOG) is requesting proposals from qualified consulting firms or individuals (i.e., consultants) to develop and deliver a Regional Five-Year Strategic Plan for Broadband Services and Deployment in a five-county area, which consists of Chaffee, Lake, Fremont, Custer and Park Counties in Colorado.

This project is 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 12:00 Noon, Tuesday, June 10

Proposals must be in electronic format (on USB flash drive) and may be delivered via USPS, overnight delivery services, or in person. Proposals may also be submitted via e-mail:

#### Upper Arkansas Area Council of Governments

Attn: Judy Lohnes, Executive Director

3224-A Independence Road

Canon City, CO 81212

Email: [judy.lohnes@uaacog.com](mailto:judy.lohnes@uaacog.com)

Tel: 719-275-8350 (O)

Proposals **received** (not postmarked) by the deadline will be accepted. No proposal received after the time and date stated above will be considered, and any proposal so received shall be returned to the submitting firm unopened. Hand carried proposals must be delivered to the UAACOG at the street address shown above and presented to the front desk staff.

The contract will be made with UAACOG and UAACOG will award the contract on behalf of the counties listed above based on the evaluation criteria contained in the RFP.

UAACOG reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, to waive informalities and to refuse any RFP. UAACOG also reserves the right to award the contract as it deems will best serve the interests of the participating counties.

Published:

Judy Lohnes  
Executive Director, UAACOG

## **REQUIREMENTS**

RFP Name: Upper Arkansas Region Strategic Plan for Broadband Deployment

## **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 Upper Arkansas Area Council of Governments and the Contractor;
- b. "Contractor" or "Provider" means the successful Applicant to this RFP who enters into a written Contract with the Upper Arkansas Area Council of Governments;
- c. "UAACOG" means the Upper Arkansas Area Council of Governments;
- d. "Region" means the participating jurisdictions in the Upper Arkansas Region of Colorado, which consists of Chaffee, Fremont, Custer and Park 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 UAACOG 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 UAACOG rules to assure a proper accounting for all costs and funds collected. These records shall be submitted for audit purposes to UAACOG. The Provider shall submit financial, program progress and other reports as requested by UAACOG.
3. Information provided by UAACOG shall be used only for purposes intended and in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations.
4. The final document will belong to the participating counties and will be a public record.

## **SERVICE DESCRIPTION**

UAACOG is looking for a Contractor to assist the steering committee in developing a five-county strategic plan for broadband.

The participating jurisdictions include: Chaffee, Custer, Fremont, Lake and Park Counties

The plan will primarily address broadband services.

The development of a strategic plan addresses the need to coordinate multiple private and public efforts towards a common goal of improving broadband capability and deployment 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; 5) address sustainability and maintenance of the network into the future; 6) and assessment of carriers concerns, current status, and possible future deployment and projects. These steps will ensure that the region builds on statewide efforts already underway in a coordinated approach to improving broadband in the region.

UAACOG will convene a steering committee that will consist of one representative and an alternate from each county local technology planning team. This representative will serve as the point person for their county and work with UAACOG 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. UAACOG staff will serve as the Project Manager.

### **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 steering committee to specifically identify the components of the strategic plan document
- work with steering committee to identify all of the required meetings, workshops, and tasks necessary to complete the plan document
- participate in bi-weekly status sessions with the regional broadband planning project steering committee and provide written reports to confirm progress by all parties relevant to the timeline requirements
- take the lead on all necessary data collection
- attend all steering committee meetings (these may be in person or electronic)
- facilitate all community specific meetings and workshops
- responsible for developing all of the content for the regional strategic plan document
- address broadband services
- 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 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
- identify where a spectrum analysis may be required
- tower and co-location recommendations
- work with each county GIS dept. to document findings and make them available to government entities for their use
- recommendations for specific actions for each county
- identify solutions for general geographic areas being as specific as possible on kind of projects
- evaluate partnership opportunities within and surrounding the region

- provide final plan, all information collected, and all supporting materials in hardcopy and electronic (editable) formats as agreed upon by UAACOG
- identify all potential partners
- interface with local carriers
- outline how plan will be structured
- develop an implementation plan to get all counties to an equivalent level with each other
- identify the status of each county and how to interconnect the counties
- provide separate chapters for each county but recognizing solutions may cross boundaries
- consult and coordinate with the Governor's Office of Information Technology (OIT) on any data collection efforts to ensure such data is compatible with state broadband data efforts

## **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 the number of locations where your services are now in use.

\* What projects have you participated in that have led to successful deployment?

\* 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 and percentage of time that will be associated with the contract and the area of expertise of each of them.

4. References:

Vendor must provide the names and telephone numbers of at least three references from similar deployment projects. Include other government agencies the vendor has evaluated and assisted with implementation of projects.

## 5. Cost of Services:

The program has a committed dollar amount to be spent on the plan. The Vendor shall detail and itemize all costs for each part of the plan that he/she is proposing. The vendor will include all necessary manpower, travel expenses, subcontract costs, and sundry costs in support of the RFP requirements. Total project cost not to exceed \$60,000.

### **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**

UAACOG will approve all payments of funds for this project upon receipt of invoices. Chosen Contractor will invoice the UAACOG every 30 days for work completed to date until completion of contract and provide a progress report on activities completed to date.

The UAACOG 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:

- Issue Date of RFP -- May 8
- Question Period – May 9 – May 29
- Questions received during the question period will be emailed to all respondents, along with the answers -- May 23-June 4
- Bidders meeting with call in option – May 22 10:00 a.m. MDT (email [judy.lohnes@uaacog.com](mailto:judy.lohnes@uaacog.com) for the GoToMeeting link or call 719-275-8350)  
Location: 3224 Independence Road, Canon City, Colorado
- RFP Due Date and Time -- noon MDT June 10 (Tues)
- Vendor Selection -- June 20
- ***Tentative*** Contract Award Date -- June 27 (if and only if the contract with DOLA is in place – all dates from this point forward are contingent on the start date of the DOLA contract)
- Draft Plan Document presented to UAACOG Council -- Sept. 26
- Scope of Work to be completed and Final Document Presented -- Oct. 24
- Contract end date/Grant agreement expiration date – Nov. 7

### **VENDOR QUALIFICATIONS**

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

## **EVALUATION AND CONTRACT AWARD**

UAACOG shall evaluate and select a Vendor to provide the required services based on the completed proposal responses. UAACOG 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. UAACOG 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 UAACOG 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 UAACOG 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**

The UAACOG 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 UAACOG 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 UAACOG 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 [judy.lohnes@uaacog.com](mailto:judy.lohnes@uaacog.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.

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

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

The Vendor agrees, if his/her proposal is accepted by UAACOG, 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.

UAACOG is exempt from federal tax and Colorado sales tax.

### **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

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

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| a) Company Overview                                | 10 Points |
| b) Qualifications/Professional Competence/Training | 70 Points |
| c) References                                      | 15 Points |
| d) Total Cost for Service                          | 5 Points  |

TOTAL 100 Points