

Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Development Commission

Request for Proposals
Broadband Consultant Services

Published: July 13th, 2015

RESPONSES DUE BY: July 28, 2015- at 4:30pm Central Time

I. QUESTIONS

Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted by email only and directed to Erin Smith (erin.smith@umvrdc.org) at least **five (5) days prior to the due date of the RFP**. No verbal questions regarding the RFP will be considered.

II. GENERAL

The Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Development Commission (UMVRDC) is soliciting proposals for professional planning and technical consulting services for a regional fiber feasibility study on behalf of Big Stone, Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Swift and Yellow Medicine counties.

The selected consultant will assist a Task Force representing the region in obtaining factual information on current technology conditions, how existing networks could connect to a regional network, possible accomplishments through a network in terms of collaboration and financing, and costs associated with a shared network as well as other project outcomes outlined in the Scope of Work. The study will focus on public sector entities such as but is not limited to: city halls, libraries, police departments, hospitals, schools, and county buildings and other public sector entities.

Further services, such as RFP development or contract administration services related to potential implementation, may be requested by the UMVRDC in the future, but are not included in this solicitation.

Sealed proposals shall be received until July 28th, 2015 at 4:30pm. Proposals received after the date and time specified will be returned unopened.

III. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A large group of stakeholders met in October 2014 from various public sector offices such as hospitals, schools, and cities and counties and identified interest in the feasibility of a regional fiber ring that would connect public sector organizations.

It was identified that a feasibility study must engage a variety of internet providers that currently serve our region and gather information about current network systems being utilized throughout the region. Many of the public agencies are currently contracting with providers to serve their needs individually and we would like to address the needs, issues, and opportunities to a regional fiber ring for all public sector organizations.

Through research and information gathering, the region has been building relationships with people and organizations across the state who have implemented collaborative regional approaches to broadband. These examples of have helped to design this project and inspire the region about the possibilities of a regional network.

A connected region will allow for shared knowledge, an efficient system that will benefit the public, contribute to professional retention, and increase capacity. A positive ripple effect could affect other areas of the organizations and strengthen the overall health of our communities and the shared public network could serve as a backbone for future business and residential broadband expansion.

Goals for a regional network include:

1. Identify how equipment and staff could be shared through a network
2. Identify current connections, limitations, and barriers, costs, and funding sources for existing connections.
3. Identify possible collaborative services such as data backup, reporting, and redundancy

-A demographic profile is attached for more information about the UMRDC region.

IV. QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

To be qualified for this opportunity the respondent must meet these minimum qualifications;

1. Be an independent consultant, i.e., not be a reseller or provider of broadband equipment or services
2. Have experience providing technical consulting services at the city, county, or school board level. See Section VIII.A.3 for reference requirements
3. Carry appropriate insurance. See Section V for insurance requirements
4. Include in their proposal personnel with the following certifications:
 - a. Project Management Professional (PMP - Project Management Institute)
 - b. Registered Communications Distribution Designer (RCDD - BICSI)

In addition to those minimum requirements, there is an expectation that the consultant will have a broad range of knowledge regarding broadband technologies including, but not limited to:

- BICSI standards for outside plant cabling (aerial & underground) and building entrance facilities
- OSI layer 2 and layer 3 wide area networking;
- Wi-Fi Alliance standards, point-to-point and point-to-multipoint wireless technology, and wireless signal propagation expertise as well as knowledge of current wireless products;
- Knowledge about current fiber-based network electronics products from multiple manufacturers;
- Knowledge of the legal and regulatory landscape in Minnesota related to broadband;
- An understanding of the services public sector entities typically require, as well as the technical, operational and organizational implications of those requirements.

V. SCOPE OF THE WORK

The following is intended to illustrate the types of services that will be required of the selected consultant. It is not intended to eliminate other services which the consultant believes to be necessary and is able to provide. The actual scope of the work will be determined upon selection of the consultant and shall be mutually agreed upon by both parties.

1. Meet with UMVRDC's assigned Task Force to review goals and objectives, and to present information about new technologies and anticipated changes the members should be aware of.
2. Compile existing broadband systems including an overview of the infrastructure, tower mapping, service offerings, competitive demand, and partnership evaluation. Develop telecommunications inventory that outlines where fiber, conduits, water towers etc. are located within the regional area.
3. Compile telecommunications inventory of current providers, infrastructure, location of fiber, conduits, water towers, etc. located within the region.
4. Interview public sector stakeholders and identify current contract renewal dates and costs associated with current network. A directory is provided in the appendix.
5. Research current commercial broadband providers in the UMVRDC area.
6. Determine and describe the public sector entities requirements, including the sites to be connected, bandwidth, quality of service, redundancy potential, demand growth, and other identified requirements.
7. Outline the feasibility and options for creating a regional network describing activities to be undertaken and the anticipated costs and timing of those activities.
8. A preliminary engineering and cost analysis for deployment of fiber to the premise estimate. This should include fiber mapping, pre-engineering, cost analysis, barriers, current connection costs, and regulatory observations.
9. Identify opportunities for network to be base layer for a network to extend to the private sector of business and residential customers.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

UMVRDC

1. Administer project
2. Coordinate Task Force Meetings
3. Point of contact for Task Force and consultant
4. Compile list of public sector contacts and information for consultant

Task Force

1. Review submitted applications
2. Interview potential consultants
3. Serve as advisory committee throughout the development of the study

VI. INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

Following are the required levels of insurance coverages for which the selected consultant must provide certificates before a contract is signed:

- A. Workers Compensation Insurance consisting of statutory compensation benefits and \$100,000 of employer's liability.
- B. Comprehensive or Commercial General Liability Insurance with limits of not less than \$2,000,000 combined single limit per occurrence and aggregate. This coverage shall include contractual liability coverage.
- C. Comprehensive Owned and Non-owned Automobile Liability Insurance with the limits of \$1,000,000 combined single limit per occurrence and aggregate.
- D. Professional Liability Insurance coverage with an annual occurrence and aggregate limit of not less than \$2,000,000.

VII. EVALUATION AND SELECTION

Candidates must meet the minimum qualification requirements under section IV. Qualifying candidates will be evaluated according to the form on page 7 of this document.

The Task Force will review and make all recommendations to the UMVRDC for the selection of the consultant.

Upon recommendations from the Task Force, respondents may be selected for interviews, after which a second round of scoring would be applied.

VIII. PROPOSAL RESPONSE FORMAT

To be considered, each proposal shall contain the following information:

- A. Firm's Capability:
 - 1. Contact Information: State the full name and address of your organization, include the name, address, telephone number and email address of the person in your organization who has primary responsibility for developing this proposal and to whom questions may be addressed.
 - 2. Firm Profile: Provide up to five (5) pages about the firm's background, organization and capabilities.
 - 3. Experience/References: Proposals shall include a description of the firm's overall experience in handling projects similar in character and scope to this project. Include at least three (3) different references, each listing the organization name, contact person, email address, telephone number, dates of service, and a description of the services the consultant provided.

4. Personnel: Proposals shall identify each member of the consultant's staff who would work on the project, relevant expertise and experience of that individual and the role each will perform. Further, provide a resume for each individual.
 5. Statement of Objectivity: Proposals will be accepted only from independent consultants not engaged in or associated with the business of selling, servicing, or renting communication equipment. Responses must provide a statement of the independence and objectivity of the consultant.
- B. Approach: Based upon information contained in this Request for Proposal, prospective consultants shall prepare a preliminary work plan identifying the specific tasks they believe to be necessary to accomplish the objectives for this project. The plan shall detail in a simple and straightforward manner the step-by-step approach the consultant proposes.
 - C. Deliverables: identify and describe the specific deliverables
 - D. Schedule: The proposal shall include a timeframe for completion of the project.
 - E. Expectations from the UMVRDC and or Task Force: Describe any items or areas where the consultant expects additional information or assistance not outlined under Roles and Responsibilities.
 - F. Contract Price: The proposal shall include a fixed price sum for performing the tasks outlined in the Approach section above. The fixed price sum quoted herein may be adjusted upward or downward in accordance with the final determination as to the scope of the work to be performed.

Consultant Evaluation Score Sheet

Firm being evaluated: _____

Date and time: _____

| | FACTORS | POSSIBLE POINTS (weighting factor) | RATING (on a scale of 1-10) | TOTAL (Multiply first two numbers) |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 | Prior consulting experience with local governments/references | 15 | | |
| 2 | Stability and structure of firm | 10 | | |
| 3 | Qualifications of assigned team: Areas of expertise/ certifications Years of experience Years with firm Education/training Work with similar project/clients | 15 | | |
| 4 | Project management capabilities | 5 | | |
| 5 | Firm's understanding of the work to be performed | 5 | | |
| 6 | Approach and schedule offered by firm meets our needs/expectations | 25 | | |
| 7 | Cost | 25 | | |
| | TOTAL | 100 | N/A | |