

I. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to solicit expressions of interest from qualified contractors to establish a contract through competitive negotiation for consulting services to produce a comprehensive Community Telecommunications Master Plan (the Plan) for Albemarle County, Virginia. The County's goal is to provide Broadband service to meet or exceed the FCC's Broadband standard of 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload to all households and businesses in the County. Albemarle County has been awarded a Virginia Telecommunication Planning Initiative (VATPI) grant of \$75,000, through the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), to develop the Plan.

The Albemarle County Broadband Management Team will provide oversight and direction throughout the process of developing the Plan, including collaboration with the outside consultant. The Management Team includes Subject Matter Experts (The IT Director for Albemarle County, the CIO for Albemarle County Schools, and the Director of the Charlottesville-UVA-Albemarle Emergency Communications Center), as well as representatives from government, economic development, higher education, workforce development, and business.

II. TIMEFRAME:

All project activities must be completed no later than June 30, 2016 with a draft report completed by May 31, 2016.

III. SCOPE OF SERVICES:

The Plan produced through this project must, at a minimum, include the following:

1. **Identification of Deficits:** The Plan is intended to lay the groundwork for the implementation of Broadband Service to unserved and underserved (under 10 Mbps downstream) areas of the County. The County developed a Broadband Task Force Report dated September 3, 2014, and has done some additional survey work and data gathering since the release of the report. The Task Force Report included an inventory of known assets, funding options, and survey results. The report is available at http://www.albemarle.org/upload/images/Forms_Center/Departments/Board_of_Supervisors/Forms/Agenda/2014Files/0903/17.a_BroadbandAttachA.pdf. The Plan shall include an identification of deficits in service throughout the County, of sufficient accuracy and detail to serve as the basis for the buildout plan.
2. **Buildout Plan:** The Plan shall present buildout alternatives for the full geographic area of the County (a roadmap to an outcome), including connections between the end user and the Internet. The Plan must outline alternative strategies to work with incumbent service providers and/or detail proposed regulatory amendments to facilitate service upgrades to meet the needs of these residents. The Plan must include a network design including the type of infrastructure (e.g. aerial and/or buried fiber, wireless, hybrid, DSL copper, cable, or WISP) that best suits the telecommunication needs of each area, considers geographic sensitivity, identifies rights-of-way, and specifies network elements. The Plan must address the extension of services where the service area crosses county boundaries. The Plan must identify potential service providers within Virginia that can be engaged to develop public-private partnership solutions for unserved and underserved parts of the County. CenturyLink is a provider in the County, and has accepted annual, ongoing support from the Connect

America Fund (CAF) to deliver broadband at speeds of at least 10 Mbps for downloads and 1 Mbps uploads to homes and businesses in its rural service areas where the cost of broadband deployment might otherwise be prohibitive. The Albemarle County School system is developing an educational Broadband system for student access, independent of any commercial system, using 4G Wireless and Fiber Build to install fiber along I-64. The County's Public Safety Department is in the process of upgrading their wireless system. Albemarle County is a partner in the Charlottesville-UVA-Albemarle County Emergency Communications Center network.

3. **Cost Estimate:** The Plan shall include cost estimates for the telecommunication system, considering options and hybrid plans and/or phased implementation.
4. **Partnerships/Funding Strategies:** The Plan must identify potential public and private partners for implementation of the Plan. The Plan must also inventory potential funding sources (including governmental sources, foundations, and private resources) and financing options for implementation of the Plan. Each funding source must be described by the type of project(s) that is/are eligible, the amount(s) available, any required matching funds, and deadlines for applications.
5. **Identify Barriers to Implementation:** The Plan must identify obstacles to implementing the telecommunications network, including, but not limited to technology, geography and topography, public policies, and issues with private providers. The Plan must also identify potential strategies to address the identified barriers.
6. **Organizational Options:** The Plan must identify organizational options for ownership and operation of the network allowable under Virginia law including, but not limited to, owner/operator, public-private partnerships, and leasehold agreements. Options must include potential staffing requirements, legal requirements, maintenance, and budgeting estimates. The Plan must include an analysis of the potential to combine the planned County network with telecommunication plans in neighboring counties to create a robust broadband network for the region. The Plan must include a review of efforts by other Virginia counties to develop broadband authorities and the structural strengths and weaknesses of the proposed authorities, recommendations of public-private partnership structures that can leverage existing County infrastructure or rights-of-way to serve underserved locations.

IV. PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS:

A. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **RFP Response:** In order to be considered for selection, offerors must submit a complete response to this RFP. One (1) original and five (5) copies of each proposal along with an electronic copy of the proposal on CD or other electronic format, either in Microsoft Word or PDF format, must be submitted to the County as a complete sealed proposal. Should the proposal contain **proprietary information**, provide **one (1) redacted hard copy and one (1) redacted electronic copy** of the proposal and attachments **with proprietary portions removed or blacked out**. These copies should be clearly marked "*Redacted Copy*" on the front cover and in the file name. The classification of an entire proposal document, line item prices and/or total proposal prices as proprietary or trade secrets is not acceptable. The County of Albemarle shall not be responsible for the Contractor's failure to exclude proprietary information from this redacted copy, whether hard copy or electronic.