



City of Fountain
2020 Request for Information
for
Cost-Competitive, Reliable,
High Capacity Gigabit Speed
Broadband Services

Request For Information

TS20-001

OVERVIEW

The City of Fountain is interested in gauging the interest of capable entities to partner with the City to provide cost-competitive, reliable, high-capacity, gigabit speed broadband to residents, businesses and anchor institutions through an area-wide fiber-to-the-premises (FTTP) network or similarly performing technology.

Responses to the request will be received up until 5pm MST on March 20, 2020 at City Hall located at 116 South Main Street, Fountain, Colorado 80817.

If mailed, the address is 116 South Main Street, Fountain, CO 80817 and must be in a separate sealed envelope from the shipping package. Responses must be received at City Hall prior to 5pm MST on March 20, 2020

A copy of the RFI and associated documentation may be obtained as follows:

1. The BidNet website at www.bidnetdirect.com
2. City Hall located at 116 South Main Street, Fountain, CO 80817

Questions:

Questions and clarifications pertaining to matters contained in this RFI should be made in writing and emailed to **Lisa Godwin, Technology Services Director** at:

lgodwin@fountaincolorado.org

It is the responsibility of prospective Respondents to contact **Lisa Godwin at (719) 322-2000** to verify receipt of questions. Based on such inquiries, the City may choose to issue an Addendum.

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

The City of Fountain (“City”) issues this Request for Information (“RFI”) for the purpose of gauging the interest of capable entities to partner with the City to make cost-competitive, reliable, high-capacity, gigabit speed broadband available to all Fountain Electric Service Territory residents, businesses, and anchor institutions through an area-wide fiber-to-the-premises (“FTTP”) network or similarly performing technology; Required Services.

Required Services can include, but is not limited to, providing high-speed internet/broadband service throughout the Electric Service Territory, the deployment of a fiber-to-the-home solution, fixed wireless solution, or some other type of last-mile solution. The City intends to be an infrastructure partner only and does not intend to act as a retail service provider or network operator.

The City seeks expressions of interest (“Responses”) from all interested entities including incumbent service providers, competitive providers, nonprofit organizations, public cooperatives, nontraditional providers, and any other interested, capable entities.

Successful Responses to this RFI will demonstrate how the respondent’s approach will effectively deploy and provide the Required Services throughout the Fountain Electric Utility’s service area in a manner consistent with Colorado laws. The City is seeking responses that focus on the public/private partnership agreements and/or franchise business models.

The City is most interested in identifying providers able to construct and manage a robust network that leads to reliably providing cost-competitive access to the Required Services in a timely manner (1–2 years).

Respondents are encouraged to share their expertise so that it may be used to shape the direction and formation of the network. Multiple providers may collaborate to respond to this RFI. Responses to this RFI may be used by the City to prequalify, based on capability, organizations who may be interested in responding to any subsequent future Request for Proposal or Request for Quotation initiatives for this project.

SECTION 2: RFI OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

2.1 OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE:

The City’s objectives and scope of the RFI process are as follows:

1. Identify entities interested in engaging with the City to make the Required Services available in the Fountain Electric Utility’s service area.
2. At the City’s option, meet with select respondents for in-depth discussions regarding the entities’ approach, capability, business model, and proposed key terms and conditions. Discussions may be expanded to jointly develop details of a potential agreement, nonexclusive franchise, or other business arrangement.

Based on the outcome of the RFI and subsequent discussions with select entities, the City will negotiate a business arrangement with one (1) or more entities to deploy the Required Services in Fountain.

2.2 REQUIRED SERVICES

The City's Requirements include the following:

1. Ubiquitous, cost-competitive, reliable, high-capacity, gigabit speed broadband available to all Fountain Electric Service Territory residents, businesses, and anchor institutions through an area-wide fiber-to-the-premises ("FTTP") network or similarly performing technology.
2. Low income option for Internet Service within the Fountain Electric Service Territory.

2.3 ADDENDA TO THE REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

If it becomes necessary to revise any part of the RFI, an addendum will be posted on the BidNet website (www.bidnetdirect.com) by **March 13, 2020** Respondents are responsible to check online prior to submission of their response.

2.4 RESPONDENT RESPONSIBLE FOR RFI COSTS

The City is not liable for any costs incurred by any Respondent associated with the preparation and submission of a response to this RFI, including costs related to potential travel to Fountain or supplying requested studies, plans, specifications, or other information.

2.5 CONFIDENTIALITY

Respondents acknowledge that the City may be required to disclose any or all of the documents submitted with a response, pursuant to the Colorado Open Records Act, C.R.S 2472-200.1, et seq. Under C.R.S § 24-72-204(3)(a)(IV), the City may deny inspection of any confidential commercial or financial information furnished to the City by an outside party. Respondents **must clearly designate** any documents or content submitted **proprietary or confidential** to avoid being disclosed in the event of a request for documents under the Colorado Open Records Act. Responses submitted and terms and conditions specified in each Respondent's response shall remain the property of the City.

SECTION 3: PROJECT BACKGROUND AND MARKET DEMAND

Fountain, Colorado is located 10 miles southeast of Colorado Springs.

Other facts about Fountain include the following:

Elevation: 5,545 feet above sea level

2010 Census Population: 27,817,

2019 Population: 30,810

Median Age: 30 years

Total area within City limits: 24.5 square miles

Average Precipitation: 17 inches

Average Snowfall: 32 inches

The City of Fountain's Electric Department maintains the electric distribution and transmission system within an area of approximately 66.7 square miles. The City has approximately 18,000 electric meters within the electric

service territory. The City has approximately 2.8 miles of 115 KV transmission line. Approximately 70% of the City's electric system is underground.

Improving telecommunication services is one of the main priorities of the City Council and is included as one of the principle objectives of the strategic plan.

The City voted in an election to support opting out of the 2005 Colorado Senate Bill 152 restrictions on possible City involvement in providing broadband services. This vote allows the City and citizens to consider and pursue the best decisions about possible City involvement in broadband services based on the needs and desires of the community.

A feasibility study was conducted which further confirmed the need and desire for improved broadband services in the region.

The final outcome of this RFI will identify businesses with capability and interest in partnering in an electric territory wide broadband system as a partnership with the City of Fountain.

Depending on the nature of questions and clarifications, with appropriate non-disclosure agreements, the City could make available certain GIS information of infrastructure and feasibility study information useful in responding to this RFI.

SECTION 4: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION SUBMITTAL

Qualified entities that are capable and may have an interest in engaging with the City to contract, deploy, and/or operate the Required Services are encouraged to respond to this RFI.

Respondents are encouraged, but not required, to provide the following information in response to this RFI:

1. Company name, address, website;
2. Organization type (corporation, subsidiary, partnership, individual, joint venture, other);
3. The name and contact information (email, phone) of the company representative responsible for providing further information;
4. A brief overview of the company's capabilities, management, and key project team members pertaining to providing the Required Services;
5. Demonstrate the firm's and team's experience and roles in planning, engineering, financing, constructing, implementing, or operating networks able to provide the Required Services; note particular successes in collaborating with a public municipality or utility;
6. Evidence your firm, management, and team is financially capable to implement proposed activities:
 - a. Recent (last two fiscal years) financial statements consisting of a balance sheet, statement of cash flows, and income statements;
 - b. Providing independently reviewed financial statements is preferred;

- c. Anecdotal evidence of the ability to access funding in the manner and scale appropriate to provide the Required Services;
 - d. Disclosure of financial, legal, or other business matters that would present challenges to access funding and any other information pertinent to developing a public/private partnership, entering into agreements with a public entity, or contracting for services.
7. A brief description of how you envision a partnership working with Fountain including the key elements of the partnership.
8. A brief, high-level description of the entity's proposed solutions, products, and services including, but not limited to:
- a. Key components of a proposed business model, including describing its:
 - i. Business or network ownership structure;
 - ii. Roles and levels of ongoing governance, management, operations, customer billing, and customer service functions by each proposed party;
 - iii. Geographical coverage of the proposed network and services being provided;
 - iv. Core technologies used to provide Required Services and levels of redundancies;
 - v. Key product and service suppliers central to implementing the Required Services;
 - vi. Elements of network construction being undertaken by proposed parties, including network design, engineering, vendor selection, and construction;
 - vii. Implementation schedules including geographical coverage phasing;
 - viii. Implementation strategies and roles including branding or co-branding, community engagement, customer education, marketing, and others impacting the project's success.
 - ix. Proposed cost of monthly service (to residential, low income, business, dark fiber, etc.); and factors impacting monthly costs (as specific as possible);
 - b. Key legal and risk management provisions required by all proposed parties to enter into agreements or non-exclusive franchise arrangements, including key terms and conditions;
 - c. Innovative features of the solution/product(s), including a general description of unique benefits provided by proposed partner. Include any enhanced abilities to provide economic development and quality of life benefits to the Fountain community, schools, medical facilities, residents, and businesses;
 - d. Other information as deemed pertinent by respondents.
 - e. Description on how partner plans

SECTION 5: AREAS OF COOPERATION

This section highlights ways that the City could cooperate with respondents to improve the business case for proposed solutions. We encourage respondents to be creative and suggest other types of partnerships or

business opportunities of interest. The City of Fountain is willing to coordinate and collaborate terms for this partnership.

1. **Resources and facilities:** Explanation of need for access to community assets and resources. Respondents should also address the relative importance and impact of variations in terms of more flexibility with respect to accessing community assets, facilities and policies. The following is a list of potential resources that the City is willing to negotiate.
 - a. Existing City owned fiber
 - b. Existing City owned spare conduit (Installed 19,394 ft [3.67 miles] of spare conduit with all main feeders for the last 10 years and to all new constructed homes in the last 18 months.)
 - c. 85% of poles to date on the system have been modified to accommodate potential new fiber. (170 miles of overhead equating to 27% of the system)
 - d. Ability to assist with right-of-way acquisition.
 - e. Ability to install assets on City owned property.
 - f. Potential CO (Central Office) building shell space.
 - g. Potential use of Electric Department resources during construction.
 - h. Potential marketing assistance and advocacy.
 - i. Potential cost sharing of attachment and make-ready assessment fees.
2. **Regulatory environment:** Description of any rules or regulations at the federal, state or local level that could impact the feasibility or underlying economics associated with the proposed solutions. Responses should also include an explanation of any forms of proposed regulatory relief, including streamlined permitting, which could improve the economic case for the business models or network solutions proposed or for other network solutions that respondents considered but dismissed due to existing regulations and their effect on economic viability of such proposal.
3. **Contracting issues:** Explanation of any material considerations or expectations that respondents have with respect to any of the following issues likely to be negotiated during any future Requests for Proposals:
 - a. Intellectual property
 - b. Insurance
 - c. Indemnities
 - d. Warranties
 - e. Dispute resolution
 - f. Problems with current providers if any.
 - g. Other contracting issues not specifically listed above.
4. **Other partnership or revenue opportunities:** Discussion of any other types of partnerships or working relationships between respondents and supporters which could improve the business case for respondents to partner with one or more supporters. For example, a company may work with universities and the surrounding communities to develop partnerships that allow the company to deliver voice, video and data services, and/or to pilot cutting-edge new products, recruit new employees, or enter branding and marketing agreements.

SECTION 6: SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. All Responses must be received no later than 5pm MST on March 20, 2020. The respondent shall submit one (1) paper copy or one (1) emailed electronic copy, PDF format (under 10MB), of their response.
2. Responses must be submitted in a sealed envelope addressed to:

RFI- Gigabit Speed Broadband Services Attention:

Lisa Godwin
City of Fountain
116 South Main Street
Fountain CO 80817

Or hand deliver/ overnight/courier to:

116 South Main Street
Fountain, CO 80817

Or emailed to:

Email: silvia@fountaincolorado.org
Cc: lgodwin@fountaincolorado.org
Cc: Broadband@fountaincolorado.org

3. Responses received after the deadline will be discarded or returned to the respondent unopened. Please allow extra time for delivery before the deadline.

SECTION 7: QUESTIONS

Potential respondents seeking pre-submittal information should contact Lisa Godwin at:

lgodwin@fountaincolorado.org or (719) 322-2000

Questions and clarifications pertaining to matters contained in this RFI should be made in writing and directed to Lisa Godwin using the contact information provided above. At its sole discretion, the City may conduct a pre-submittal meeting with potential respondents to respond to questions and clarify matters contained in this RFI. Meetings may be held individually or in a group format. All questions are due by March 10, 2020.