

Indiana County, Pennsylvania
By and through the
Indiana County Commissioners

Request for Proposals

For

High Speed Internet/Broadband Services

Date Issued 08/06/2022

Proposal Submission Deadline:

09/21/2022 – by 3:00 p.m.

**Mail or Hand Deliver Proposal
to Primary Contact:**

Byron G. Stauffer, Jr.
Executive Director
Indiana County Office of Planning & Development
Indiana County Courthouse Annex
801 Water Street
Indiana, PA 15701-1705

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SUMMARY

Indiana County, Pennsylvania, hereinafter referred to as “County,” is requesting proposals from all interested providers of High-Speed Internet/Broadband (hereafter “Internet”) services for affordable, reliable high-speed Internet access for residential, business, and government constituents.

The term “offeror” shall refer to providers submitting proposals in response to this Request for Proposals (RFP). The term “Contractor” or “Provider” is also used to describe the successful offeror(s) in the context of providing services under a contract resulting from this RFP.

An electronic copy of the RFP packet may be downloaded from www.indianacountypa.gov or www.icopd.com.

Each proposal received in response to this RFP will be evaluated on the criteria described herein. All proposals must be sealed, clearly marked “PROPOSAL – Indiana County, PA High-Speed Internet Service” and must include all elements described in the **PROPOSAL CONTENT AND FORMAT REQUIREMENTS** section of this RFP.

One original and five (5) copies along with a thumb drive (.pdf format) of the proposal must be delivered to the address below before the date and time listed in the **CONTRACT AWARD SCHEDULE** section of this RFP. The County will not be responsible for proposals delivered to a person or location other than that specified herein, and reliance on the postal service will not excuse late proposals.

Access to County data for the identification of demand and assets is available by request.

Any amendment or addendum to this RFP is valid only if issued in writing by the County.

1. CONTRACT AWARD SCHEDULE

Advertise RFP	August 6, 2022
Proposal Submission Deadline	September 21, 2022 by 3:00 PM
Contract Award(s) (tentative)	September 28, 2022
Services to Begin (tentative)	TBD, as further negotiated.

2. GENERAL CONDITIONS

2.1. Prime Responsibility: The selected provider will be required to assume full responsibility for all services and activities offered in its proposal(s), whether or not provided directly. Further, the County will consider the selected Contractor(s) to be the sole point of contact regarding contractual matters, including payment of any and all charges resulting from the contract.

2.2. Assurance: Any contract awarded under this RFP must be carried out in full compliance with all laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, all applicable codes and standards, and in following best industry and safety practices. The County prohibits discrimination in employment or in the

provision of services because of race, color, religion, religious creed, sex, age, marital status, ancestry, national origin, political affiliation, physical disability or medical condition. This clause does not require the hiring of unqualified persons.

- 2.3. Independent Contractor: In performance of the work, duties and obligations assumed by the offeror, it is mutually understood that the offeror, and all of the offeror's officers, agents and employees, will at all times be acting and performing in an independent capacity and not as an officer, agent, servant, employee, joint venture, partner or associate of the County.
- 2.4. The County reserves the right to reject any and all proposals; to negotiate specific terms, conditions, compensation, and provisions on any contracts that may arise from this solicitation; to waive any informalities or irregularities in the proposals; and to accept the proposal(s) that appear(s) to be in the best interest of the County. In determining and evaluating the proposals, costs will not necessarily be the sole factor; the experience of those who will be providing services under the contract, quality, equality, efficiency (number of customers covered at the service levels specified compared to the cost), utility, suitability of the services offered, and the reputation of applicants will be considered, along with other relevant factors.
- 2.5. The County reserves the right to:
 - Request clarification of any submitted information;
 - Not enter into any agreement;
 - Not select any applicant, offeror, provider and/or contractor;
 - Amend or cancel this process at any time;
 - Interview applicants prior to award and request additional information during the interview;
 - Negotiate a multi-year contract or a contract with an option to extend the duration;
 - Issue similar RFPs in the future.
- 2.6. Prior to commencement of services, the Contractor must provide evidence of the following insurance coverages in amounts satisfactory to the County: Worker's Compensation, Commercial General Liability (naming the County as additional insured), Comprehensive Business or Commercial Automobile Liability for Owned Automobiles and Non-owned /Hired Automobiles. The Contractor will be required to maintain the required coverages, at its sole cost and expense, throughout the entire term and any subsequent renewal terms of the contract.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. From constituent inquiries as well as research provided through various studies and documents, the County is seeking high-speed broadband services (Internet solution) that will serve residents, business and governments, including schools and educational facilities not already served, throughout Indiana County, Pennsylvania that are considered unserved and/or underserved. For purposes of this RFP, a project area that is considered "unserved", shall mean that there is no access to broadband service or lacks access to reliable broadband service with a speed of not less than twenty-five (25) megabits per second for downloads and three (3) megabits per second for uploads and a latency sufficient to support real-time, interactive applications, and to be considered "underserved", shall mean that the project area is not an unserved area and lacks access to reliable broadband service offered with a speed of not less than one hundred (100) megabits per second for downloads and twenty (20) megabits per second (Mbps) for uploads and a latency sufficient to support real-time, interactive applications; therefore, the County's goal is to facilitate access to high-quality internet services in unserved and underserved areas as that term is defined as minimum speed thresholds that are available at 100/20 Mbps download/upload for residences and 100/100 Mbps down/up for businesses and government constituencies. Areas in which incumbent providers do not offer these speeds at a minimum are considered by County to be "underserved" and are eligible to be included in the project area. Proposals with higher speeds will be given preferential consideration, such as 100/100 Mbps download/upload speeds for residences as well, with all areas to have future growth capabilities to Gig speeds.

- 3.2. The County is seeking proposals from Internet Service Provider(s) (ISPs) to construct and install internet in order to connect and serve the unserved and underserved rural areas of the County as defined in Section 4.1. Proposed solutions may be considered that have two separate options for: internet service in a small geographical area (an area of one or two municipalities – defined as boroughs or townships) or internet service which will cover three or more municipalities in the County.
- 3.3. Proposed solutions must be highly reliable (99.99% or better) and provide low-link-latency capable of carrying multicast, real-time streaming and video conferencing.
- 3.4. A map showing vertical assets will be available upon request.
- 3.5. The selected entity must be willing to have local representation on a full-time basis.
- 3.6. The selected entity will be required to market their offerings to customers through a County-approved marketing plan.
- 3.7. Preference may be given to firms that offer creative ways to fund this project.

4. DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES REQUIRED

4.1. Scope of Services

- 4.1.1. Provide turn-key Internet access to the end-user(s) within 300' of fiber optic lines and within the service radius of wireless solutions;
- 4.1.2. Provide local sales and technology support;
- 4.1.3. Provide pricing and service levels for residential internet access along with time-to-market for implementation to residential areas. This includes providing for the first year, plus promotional discounts, if any.
- 4.1.4. Provide a leased space proposal for installation of vendor equipment on top of County vertical assets if needed.

4.2. Detailed Description(s) of Services Required

4.2.1. Residential fiber / wireless network

- a. High-speed internet access for unserved and underserved rural customers;
- b. Minimum offering of at least 50/10 Mbps down/up speed, with additional delivery speeds available, with preference for 100/20 Mbps, or even 100/100 Mbps download/upload capability, with tiered pricing models;
- c. Longest connection distance from the wireless site, in miles? Please provide a RF coverage map.
- d. Initial residential offers must be made available within two (2) months of wired/wireless sites becoming active.

4.2.2. Commercial fiber / wireless network

- a. Provide location information for the Network Operations Center (NOC), noting that preferential consideration for NOCs within Indiana County, PA boundary.
- b. Backhaul from the proposed wireless sites must be on fiber optic and that fiber optic must be available to provide both commercial and residential services.
- c. 99.99% reliability (or better);
- d. Low-link-latency (5ms or less, with 2ms preferred);
- e. Network speed of not less than 100/100 Mbps down/up speed, preferably closer to 1Gbps/1Gbps down/up speed;

- f. Longest connection distance from the wireless site, in miles? Please provide RF coverage map.
 - g. Equipment located on any roof must be efficiently placed to minimize roof footprint;
 - h. Installation is preferred to be on the roof and set back from the roof edge so that any dish or antenna is not visible from the streets, or as approved by County.
- 4.2.3. Lease space on County-owned Structures
- a. Proposed lease terms.
 - b. Roof space footprint to be clearly defined in the terms of the proposed lease and cannot conflict with the services proposed in either the residential or commercial network discussed above.
 - c. Any additional lease requirements to be clearly defined in the terms of proposed lease.

5. PROPOSAL CONTENT AND FORMAT REQUIREMENTS

Interested offerors shall submit one original plus five (5) copies along with a thumb drive (.pdf format) of their proposal to the location listed on Page 1 of this RFP.

Proposals shall be delivered no later than the date and time listed in the CONTRACT AWARD SCHEDULE and shall contain at a minimum the following items:

5.1. Cover Sheet (Attachment A)

- 5.1.1. Provide the full legal name of the Contractor who will execute the contract. Provide specific information concerning the agency, including: the agency's legal name, type of entity, and Federal Tax ID #.
- 5.1.2. The cover sheet must be signed by an owner, corporate officer, or agent authorized by the Contractor.

5.2. Wired / Wireless Network – 40 points

- 5.2.1. Complete Attachment B – Specifications and Pricing
Record 'N/A' in the data section of the form for any portion of the scope of service that you are NOT including in your proposal.
- 5.2.2. Provide a detailed description of the Primary Wired / Wireless Solution that you are providing.
 - a. Provide equipment specifications in adequate detail to document the performance claims reported on Attachment C.
 - b. Provide the electrical requirements for the proposed system.
 - c. Provide installation sketches or drawings showing what the vertical asset installations will look like and what connections you are proposing.
 - d. Describe any benefits that your proposed system may provide that exceed specifications or enhance performance in ways that are not otherwise documented in your proposal.

- 5.2.3. Provide details on residential and commercial access
- a. Provide maps detailing where and when each underserved or unserved area will have access to Internet.
 - b. Provide documentation of outreach to incumbent ISPs for areas where there is an overlap, verifying that overlap areas are below the 50/10 Mbps down/up speed for residential service and 100/100 Mbps down/up for commercial services.
 - c. The County does have Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) areas and every effort should be taken to avoid these areas so as not to duplicate services; however, there may be instances where crossing into RDOF areas is unavoidable and should be disclosed in the proposal for fear that it may jeopardize funding.
 - d. All fiber and wireless solutions must be constructed using all pertinent industry standards, including lawfully attached to poles or bury fiber optic lines. The National Electric Code, OSHA standards, and PA One Call procedures should be followed.
- 5.2.4. Provided a detailed description of your lease proposal for use of County-owned towers.
1. Provide Installation sketches or drawings showing what the roof installations will look like and what connections that you are proposing to make to the building.
 2. Describe any electrical requirements you may wish to include in the lease agreement.
 3. Describe any other requirements you have for your proposed lease agreement.
 4. Provide a copy of your standard lease agreement if you have one for the County to consider.

Organization Information – 20 points

- 5.2.5. Background and Experience
- a. Provide company history, internal resources, capabilities, financial resources and stability, detail any open or closed bankruptcies within the last three-years, involvement in current and/or past litigation, etc.
 - b. Provide at least three Residential and Business references that substantiate your organization's experience in providing fiber and or wireless solutions.
 - c. Provide names and qualifications of key employees assigned to this work.
 - d. Complete capabilities of the provider, including scope of available products, network maps, interconnection points, existing Tier 1 Upstream Routes, etc.
- 5.2.6. Provide a description of all available equipment and installation warranties provided in your proposed system(s).
- a. Provide names and qualifications of key employees assigned to this work.
 - b. Business and technical elements beyond the proposal price which the vendor believes makes its solution superior and better for the County's long term residential and commercial needs and economic growth.

5.3. Proposed Costs – 40 points

In addition to the customer pricing provided in Attachment B, provide any additional costs required by the County to construct the infrastructure and a timeline for implementation.

6. SELECTION PROCEDURES

Proposals will be evaluated on the criteria outlined in the PROPOSAL CONTENT AND FORMAT REQUIREMENTS section, with a maximum possible score of 100 points.

After an initial review and evaluation of each of the proposals, the offerors submitting the most highly rated proposals may be invited for interviews prior to final selection, to further elaborate on their proposals. The County reserves the right to award a contract without holding interviews, in the event the written proposals provide a clear preference on the basis of the criteria described.

The Contractor(s) selected for this project will be required to accept the County's contract and to comply with insurance standards as deemed acceptable to the County. No agreement with the County of Indiana, Pennsylvania is in effect until both parties have signed a contract.

7. INQUIRIES

Direct all inquiries regarding the proposal process or proposal submissions to:

Byron G. Stauffer, Jr.
Executive Director
Indiana County Office of Planning & Development
Indiana County Courthouse Annex
801 Water Street
Indiana, PA 15701-1705
bids@ceo.co.indiana.pa.us
724-465-3870

“THIS PROJECT IS FINANCED IN WHOLE OR IN PART BY GRANTS FROM THE APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION (ARC) POWER INITIATIVE, THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT – CARES ACT (CDBG-CV), THE KEYSTONE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM (KCP), WITH ADMINISTRATION OF THE ABOVE PROGRAMS AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT BEING PROVIDED BY THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND BY THE COUNTY OF INDIANA, UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE INDIANA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS.”

ATTACHMENT A: COVER SHEET

Name of Person, Business or Organization:	
Type of Entity: (e.g., Sole-Proprietorship, Partnership, Corp., Non-Profit, Public Agency)	
Federal Tax ID Number:	
Contact Person – Full Name	
Contact Person – Address	
Contact Person – Phone Number(s) Work Cell	
Contact Person – e-mail address	

By signing this **Cover Sheet** I hereby attest: that I have read and understood all the terms listed in the RFP; have read and understood all terms listed in this proposal; that I am authorized to bind the listed entity into this agreement; and that should this proposal be accepted, I am authorized and able to secure the resources required to deliver against all terms listed within the RFP as published by Indiana County, Pennsylvania, including any amendments or addenda thereto except as explicitly noted or revised in my submitted proposal.

I understand that the construction related services described herein are subject to Federal Davis-Bacon Wage requirements.

Signature of Authorized Representative

Printed Name of Authorized Representative

Date

Printed Title of Authorized Representative

ATTACHMENT B: SPECIFICATIONS AND PRICING
(FORMAT AS NEEDED)

Primary Network	Specification or (N/A)
Rated Reliability	
Link-induced latency	
Advertised network speed	
Connection Distance Limit	
Roof Space Required (per site)	
Wall/Rack Space Required (per site)	
Residential – Standard Price(s)	\$
Residential – Promotional Price(s) (Include length of promotional period.)	\$
Government – Standard Price(s)	\$
Government– Promotional Price(s) (Include length of promotional period.)	\$
Business – Standard Price(s)	\$
Business – Promotional Price(s) (Include length of promotional period.)	\$

SERVICE MAP	
Provide a map identifying location of fiber optic lines, proposed towers, as applicable, with designation of areas that will be likely to be connected from each tower, with designations identified as:	High Likelihood Likely Less Likely

PRICING LISTS	
Provide a complete list of products to be offered and associated pricing for each, including any discounts offered to Seniors and/or Veterans, etc.:	Residential Business Government

ATTACHMENT C: PROJECT DETAIL SPREADSHEET
(SEE ATTACHMENT “C” SPREADSHEET)

Census Tract	Municipality	Road Name / Number (e.g. Cameron Road - SR2022)	Road Point A Start	Road Point B End	Approximate Length	Number of			Insulation Type	Speed Gaps / Mbps	Download Speed	Incumbent ISP Outreach	Delivery Timeline	Build Cost
						Residential	Businesses	Number of CA# 1						
12345678910	West Wheatfield Township	12345 Dutton Road	Dutton Road	Train Station Hill	1234567891011	20	2	1	Satellite	243.2 mbps	153.2 mbps	Yes / No	May 2023	\$ 100,000,000.00

Indiana County Broadband Deployment Initiative

Company Name _____

NOTES: (1) CA# - Community Anchor Institutions (e.g. Government Buildings, Churches, Schools, Community Center, etc.)