

**MARSHALL COUNTY COMMISSION
MARSHALL-OHIO-WETZEL COUNTY REGIONAL
BROADBAND ASSESSMENT AND DESIGN PROJECT**

Request for Qualifications RFQ
**Marshall-Ohio-Wetzel County Regional Broadband Assessment
and Design Project**

PROPOSALS OPENED: October 1, 2019 at 9:15 A.M. EST

All **questions** concerning this RFQ must be submitted in writing (email is acceptable) by 1:00 PM EST of September 6, 2019 and addressed to:

**A.C. Wiethe, Director of Management Services
Belomar Regional Council
105 Bridge Street Plaza, P.O. Box 2086, Wheeling, WV 26003
awiethe@belomar.org**

Proposals must be received by October 1, 2019 at 9:00 A.M. or they will remain unopened and returned. No allowance will be made for postmark or error in delivery to incorrect address.

RFQ Documentation and any Questions Submitted to the Marshall County Commission, C/O A.C. Wiethe, Belomar Regional Council, 105 Bridge Street Plaza, P.O. Box 2086, Wheeling, WV 26003, awiethe@belomar.org can also be viewed at www.belomar.org/rfq

Proposals shall be prepared at the bidder's expense and becomes a Marshall County Commission record and therefore public record. Submit six (6) copies of the proposal, including one original (clearly marked "ORIGINAL"), and one copy in WORD software or PDF on CD/Flash Drive, shall be submitted in a sealed container. The face of the container shall be clearly marked in the lower left corner as follows:

**Marshall-Ohio-Wetzel County Regional Broadband Assessment
and Design Project**

**Proposals must be submitted to:
Marshall County Commission
c/o Marshall County Clerk
PO Box 459
Moundsville, WV 26041**

Or

**Proposals must be submitted to:
Marshall County Commission
c/o Marshall County Clerk
600 Seventh St, Room 106
Moundsville, WV 26041**

Proposal should include and will be evaluated based on:

1. Cover Sheet (Provided)
2. General Vendor Information Sheet (Provided)
3. Customer Reference Form (Provided)
4. Demonstrated Understanding of Scope of Work
5. Qualifications and Experience
6. Approach, Methodology and Timeline for Achieving Scope of Work with emphasis on identifying future implementation projects in HUD CDBG eligible areas
7. Company Resources and Project Team
8. Relevant Experience
9. Proof of insurance as described in Vendor Qualifications

Milestone	Date
Release RFQ to Vendors	August 13, 2019
Vendor Questions (if any)	September 6, 2019 at 1:00 P.M EST
Answers to RFQ Questions	September 13, 2019 at 1:00 P.M EST
Proposal Responses Due	October 1, 2019 at 9:00 A.M. EST
Proposal Responses Opened	October 1, 2019 at 9:15 A.M EST
Vendor Selection for Interviews (target)	October 7, 2019 at 5:00 P.M EST
Vendor Interviews Complete	October 15, 2019 at 5:00 P.M. EST
Contract Negotiations Complete (target)	October 21, 2019 at 5:00 P.M EST
Contract Signed	October 22, 2019 at 9:15 A.M EST
Work Begins	October 23, 2019 at 8:00 A.M EST

Evaluation Criteria	Points
Qualifications and Experience	40
Approach, Methodology and Timeline	30
Company Resources and Project Team	30

OVERVIEW

The Marshall County Commission seeks qualified vendors to conduct a broadband feasibility study. Broadband is high speed Internet that achieves a minimum of 25 Mbps download speed and 3Mbps upload speed. This project is funded through a CDBG grant, under HUD regulations for Planning and Capacity Building, 24 CFR 570.205. The selected firm will be required to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 11246, Section 109 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1974, Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968, Conflict of Interest Statement and Access to Records provisions and all other requirements as related to HUD-funded projects. The project will be implemented by a local project management team. Additional resources will be obtained through the West Virginia Broadband Enhancement Council and the State Office of GIS Coordination. The team will provide oversight and direction to the consulting entity selected.

BACKGROUND

This project and its scope cover a Multi-County Regional Area consisting of three counties (Marshall, Ohio and Wetzel). Marshall County Commission is the lead agency, which applied for and was awarded a Community Development Block Grant through the West Virginia Development Office to complete Regional Broadband Assessment and Design Project. The three counties are adjacent to one another and make up the southern three counties of the Northern Panhandle of West Virginia. I-70 runs east/west through Ohio County and West Virginia State Routes 2 passes north/south through all three counties along the Ohio River.

Marshall County has a population of 32,006, median household income of \$42,473, 2.5% minority population and 15.2% poverty rate. The Marshall County Board of Education consists of two high schools and nine elementary/middle schools. Reynold's Memorial Hospital (WVU Medicine Affiliate) is located in the City of Glen Dale (Marshall County). Marshall County is designated as an "In-Transition" County by Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC).

Ohio County has a population of 42,906, median household income of \$45,777, 6.8% minority population and 13.7% poverty rate. The Ohio County Board of Education consists of one high school and twelve elementary/middle schools. There are three higher educational facilities located within the County, which are Wheeling University, West Liberty University and West Virginia Northern Community College. The County has two medical facilities located in the City of Wheeling, which are Wheeling Hospital (WVU Medicine Managed) and Ohio Valley Medical Center. Ohio County is designated as an "In-Transition" County by Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC).

Wetzel County has a population of 15,793, median household income of \$40,694, 2.0% minority population and 23.2% poverty rate. The Wetzel County Board of Education consists of four high schools and four elementary/middle schools. West Virginia Northern Community College has a campus located in the City of New Martinsville (County Seat). Wetzel County Hospital (WVU Medicine Affiliate) is located in the City of New Martinsville. Wetzel County is designated as a "Distressed" County by Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC).

Over half of all employment in this Multi-County Region is in three sectors: trade, transportation, and utilities (21%); education and health services (19%); and government (16%). This Region has experienced great economic fluctuation over the past several years, primarily due to the volatility in the energy sectors of coal and gas production. Increase demand in shale gas have caused an increase in output, exploration, and development activity to the Region. The Region is expected to continue above average job growth over the next three to five years. Job growth could exceed expectations if PTT Global announces a decision to build an ethane cracker plant in Belmont County just across the Ohio River from Moundsville (Marshall County), WV. The Natural Resources & Mining sector makes up about 6% of the areas employment.

The Regions manufacturing sector (5%) has declined over the years but still has several plastics, chemical and metal manufactures that have benefitted from the increase in shale gas production.

Unemployment in the Region has declined to 5.5% in 2018, the lowest annual average rate in the last five years and a significant drop from 7.2 % in 2016. The BBER predict that unemployment rate will continue a gradual decline through 202 but will likely remain above state and national averages.

The Multi-County Region is served by various internet service providers with wired facilities and wireless services. Services are concentrated in Ohio County and north western Marshall County due to the high concentration of population, business and developed area of the Region. The rural areas are greatly underserved and several areas unserved

APPROACH, METHODOLOGY AND TIMELINE

Provide a review of objectives for the scope of work and an overview of the planned approach, methodology and timeline. All project activities must be completed no later than: June 30, 2020.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

- a. Experience in broadband policy development; broadband infrastructure development; and broadband project management with state and local government agencies in the past three years.
- b. Skills, technical resources and capabilities, experience and expertise in broadband development program of comparable scope and scale.
- c. Knowledge of related state and federal laws and requirements.
- d. Knowledge of broadband-specific funding programs, including the HUD CDBG program as administered by the West Virginia Development Office, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Economic Development Administration, the Appalachian Regional Commission, and other public and private funding sources.
- e. Excellent technical depth and ability to convey technical concepts to non-technical audiences.

JURISDICTION OF GENERATED DATA

All materials, maps, reports and data generated through this project shall remain the property of the local government. Data will also be provided to the State of West Virginia, West Virginia Broadband Enhancement Council, in electronic and paper format.

ASSISTANCE TO BE PROVIDED

The Marshall, Ohio and Wetzel County Commissions will provide: The location of communications towers in the county/region; access to GIS data, including maps showing telecommunications assets as reported to the State Office of GIS Coordination; FiberLocator data; and internet speed test data as reported by the West Virginia Speed Test Portal via the West Virginia Broadband Enhancement Council.

SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES

A high-level preliminary design of broadband networks outlining the types of connectivity solutions; their locations, including projects that could be implemented in identified CDBG-eligible areas; and a prioritization of those areas if the preliminary designs dictate a phased approach to construction projects. Specific components and deliverables must include:

- a. **Technical Analysis:** Research existing public and private sector internet infrastructure, technology, and assets within the project area; develop an inventory and provide recommendations for expanding broadband services to residents and businesses. Identify potential network routes and interconnection points, existing and possible infrastructure recommendations to support and maximize service utilizing regional assets with an emphasis on identifying areas eligible that would qualify under the HUD CDBG program.
- b. **Market Analysis:** Compile and analyze information on needs and usage, perform a gap analysis of existing services, identify trends by existing and potential residential and business users and anchor institutions.
- c. **Current Use Analysis:** Utilize the WV Speed Test Portal <https://broadband.wv.gov/>, surveys and other methods to evaluate presence and level of internet service among stakeholders. Identify unserved and underserved areas.
- d. **Connectivity Solutions:** Provide strategic guidance in planning broadband connectivity projects.
- e. **Broadband Development Strategies:** Develop a communications and outreach strategy to engage public and private stakeholders, internet service providers and related groups.

- f. **Preliminary Design and Cost Estimates:** Develop strategy and concept for network design, outline type(s) of technology; identify rights-of-way, describe network specifications and structural options. Include preliminary cost estimates for construction of the proposed installations and related costs such as engineering, permitting, legal services, project administration and GIS mapping. Include GIS mapping of the following: a) existing infrastructure, b) areas of need, and c) proposed infrastructure routes of connectivity solutions (base mapping will be provided). Priority should be given to CDBG-eligible areas.
- g. **Network Operation Options:** Provide an assessment of the telecommunications environment detailing the types of services, pricing, availability and limitations. Identify all potential service providers and investigate willingness to collaborate. Review viable technical and delivery methods as allowed by state and federal law. Develop a comprehensive public-private agreement template of the possible organizational/ownership structures for proposed broadband infrastructure networks between the MARSHALL COUNTY/ OHIO COUNTY OR WETZEL COUNTY and other potential business partners.
- h. **Technical Broadband Development Plan:** Develop a technical broadband development plan that includes: an assessment of service territories, backhaul routes, interconnection points, suggested routes, capacity, providers, technical and delivery models, market analysis, expansion strategies, cost estimates, funding resources, best practices, and other appropriate factors to address barriers at local and regional levels, with an emphasis on unserved and underserved areas.
- i. **Gap Analysis:** Evaluate the current environment against current and future needs. Include all stakeholders defined in the project. Determine the economic and community impact of broadband issues, including evaluation of key issues limiting broadband expansion.
- j. **Preliminary Infrastructure Application(s):** The plan must detail strategies in assisting MARSHALL COUNTY/ OHIO COUNTY OR WETZEL COUNTY in applying to identified, broadband-specific funding programs, including the HUD CDBG program and others offered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Economic Development Administration, Appalachian Regional Commission, and other public and private funding sources.

SELECTION PROCESS

The MARSHALL COUNTY COMMISSION shall have the right to reject any and all proposals, in whole or part; to reject a proposal not accompanied by the required proposal documents; or reject a proposal which is in any way incomplete or irregular. A committee of three to five (5) persons shall be established by Marshall, Ohio and Wetzel Counties to evaluate and score the proposals. The selection committee will be composed of members from the Marshall County Commission, Ohio County Commission, Wetzel County Commission, a representative from the County Emergency Management Agency and a representative retained by Marshall County Commission for the grant administration.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Vendors will be evaluated on the following criteria:

1. **Understanding of Scope of Work:** Direct industry experience is a fundamental requirement of the vendor to ensure viability of proposed strategies. This experience must be documented specifically in the proposal.
2. **Qualifications and Experience:** The MARSHALL COUNTY COMMISSION prefers firms with experience in the development of broadband infrastructure on behalf of government entities. Vendor must have direct past experience working within the telecommunications or broadband industry (carrier or Internet service provider) in a network planning, design and business development capacity. Vendor must demonstrate a working knowledge of federal funding programs such as, but not limited to, the HUD CDBG program, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Economic Development Administration, Appalachian Regional Commission, and other funding sources.
3. **Approach, Methodology and Timeline:** Capacity to perform the work within the given time limitations. Services proposed, how the local government will be involved in the planning and design process and the overall approach to the project.
4. **Company Resources and Project Team:** Professional qualifications and experience of project team. Vendor is specifically advised that any person, firm or other party to whom it proposes to award a subcontract or purchase order under this contract must be acceptable to the MARSHALLCOUNTY COMMISSION.

5. Relevant Experience: Knowledge of State and Federal telecommunications laws and familiarity with the HUD CDBG program as administered by the West Virginia Development Office. Names and contact information of clients for whom the Consultant has worked in a similar capacity within the last 3 years.
6. Vendor Qualifications: Vendor must have the authority to do business in the State of West Virginia and be properly insured.

Minority and/or female-owned businesses are encouraged to apply. The MARSHALL COUNTY COMMISSION IS an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin or against faith-based organizations.



Proposal Cover Sheet

Name of Company	
Address of Home Office	
City of Home Office	
State of Home Office	
County of Home Office	
Zip Code of Home Office	
Phone Number of Home Office	
Federal EIN	
State EIN	

Contact Name:

Contact Office Phone Number:

Contact Cell Phone Number:

Contact Email Address:

“Proposal shall be valid and binding for ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY (180) days following the proposal due date and will become part of the contract that is negotiated with the MARSHALL COUNTY COMMISSION.”

General Vendor Information Sheet

Name of parent company	
Length of time in business	
Length of time in business of providing proposed service	
Gross revenue for the prior fiscal year	
Percentage of gross revenue generated by proposed	
Total number of clients	
Total number of clients in the proposed service area	
Number of public sector clients	
Number of full-time personnel in:	
Consulting	
Sales, marketing, and administrative support	
Internet fiber-optic technical staff	
Other (please note relevant staff)	
Where is your headquarters located? Field offices?	
Which office would service this account?	
Other significant statistics related to creating feasibility projects during the past year	

If the vendor has had a contract terminated for default during the past five years, all such incidents must be described. Termination for default is defined as notice to stop performance due to the vendor's nonperformance or poor performance; and the issue was either (a) not litigated or (b) litigated, and such litigation determined the vendor to be in default. In the space provided below, submit full details of all terminations for default experienced by the vendor during the past **five years**, including the other party's name, address, and telephone number. Present the vendor's position on the matter. The MARSHALL COUNTY COMMISSION will evaluate the facts and may, at its sole discretion, reject the vendor's proposal if the facts discovered indicate that completion of a contract resulting from this RFQ may be jeopardized by selection of the vendor. If no such terminations for default have been experienced by the vendor in the past five years, declare so in the space provided.

Client Reference Form (Include Information for Three References)

Client Name	
Reference Name	
Title	
Office Phone Number	
Cell Phone Number	
Email Address	
Mailing Address	
Customer Size/Service Area	
Start Date	
End Date	
Contract Amount	

Client Name	
Reference Name	
Title	
Office Phone Number	
Cell Phone Number	
Email Address	
Mailing Address	
Customer size service	
Start Date	
End Date	
Contract Amount	

Client Name	
Reference Name	
Title	
Office Phone Number	
Cell Phone Number	
Email Address	
Mailing Address	
Customer Size/Service Area	
Start Date	
End Date	
Contract Amount	