

July 28, 2021

**Written Questions Received by 7-16-2021 at 5:00 PM CST**

**The following questions were received and are being responded to per the RFP schedule outlined in Section 2.2 of the RFP.**

1. **All applicants are hereby notified that the RFP Response Due Date as stated in the RFP is being extended to 5:00 PM CST – Friday, September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021.**
2. What available funding, and how much, is in place or set to be in place for this project?
  - a. **This project has several potential funding sources, with ARPA being the largest. The County anticipates approximately \$12.5 million to be available for broadband projects; however, this amount is subject to change depending on how the funds are allocated.**
3. How much of the ARPA money? How much is in that bucket?
  - a. **Refer to response to question #2.**
4. Will the county be offering any of their vertical assets for use on this project? i.e. towers, water towers, etc.
  - a. **The county may entertain proposals that use existing county vertical assets; however, approval of said use will be subject to the appropriate department or entity which owns and/or maintains the asset (e.g. Evansville Water and Sewer Utility for water towers).**
5. Why is the City of Evansville and Darmstadt excluded from the RFP?
  - a. **At this time, the RFP is focused on unserved and underserved residents, which tends to be rural residents in the unincorporated portions of Vanderburgh County.**
6. Can you provide shape files and a list of census blocks for the areas targeted in the RFP?
  - a. **The County does not have this information readily available, thus will not be providing it. However, applicants can acquire the .kmz data mentioned in the RFP and determine this on their own.**
7. Would the County consider funding portions of incorporated areas if provider has existing assets that can facilitate a cost-effective deployment?
  - a. **Applicants may indicate in their proposal existing assets, which may be located in incorporated areas, of which their inclusion is integral to the successful deployment of the proposed solution. However, applicants shall not include incorporated areas when stating in their proposals how many premises will be covered and at what levels of service.**



8. Please provide the scope of work awarded to Watch Communications in the previous Vanderburgh County RFP.
  - a. The final engineering plans for this award have not yet been completed; therefore, will not be provided as part of this RFP.
9. Can copies of the demographics study completed for the Evansville/Vanderburgh School Corporation be provided?
  - a. If desired, applicants are encouraged to request this information from the school corporation.
10. What is the most up to date population data of unincorporated Vanderburgh County?
  - a. Applicants are encouraged to check reputable sources for this type of information, such as [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov).
11. What is the number of addresses (business and residential) that are being considered un/underserved for this project?
  - a. It is unknown at this time the total number of addresses that are un/underserved.
12. Will the County Rural Broadband Project allow for the partner ISP to provide competitive broadband service into the incorporated areas that may be classified as “served?”
  - a. There are no restrictions in this RFP from servicing premises that may be classified as served; however, the purpose and intent (and scoring) of this RFP is to cover premises which are un/underserved.
13. Are any of the firms, consultants, sub consultants or individuals with similar roles who contributed, participated or collaborated with Vanderburgh County Rural Broadband Project precluded from bidding due to a conflict of interest, inside knowledge or undue influence?
  - a. If we understand the question correctly, yes any of those directly involved with preparation and publishing this RFP would be precluded from providing a proposal response to the RFP.
14. Open Access is stated as not required, but would it be seen favorably?
  - a. The RFP does not contemplate additional points on the scoring criteria for an open access network.
15. Can the county be more specific and provide additional details related to the optimal method or preference of the county for enacting a recovering fee?
  - a. The recovery fee would be an end-user fee collected by the ISP and administered back to the County at some regular interval. The applicant shall describe their capabilities and/or proposals for enacting this type of fee.
16. Can the county provide an example of the level of detail requested within the statement of work expected?
  - a. The Network Construction Standards are outlined in Section 4.3 of the RFP.

17. There are areas identified on the map as “deadzones” that [provider] currently serves at a minimum of 200Mbps. We understand the County would like to limit funding to unserved/underserved areas of the county. What is the best way to identify already served areas in the RFP response?
- The County seeks proposals that state clearly how many premises will be covered and at what levels of service. If an ISP believes they currently have service to certain premises, we encourage the applicant to show this as part of their proposed presence within the County.
18. There are areas identified on the map as “deadzones” where providers were awarded Rural Digital Opportunity Funds in Vanderburgh County. What is the best way to identify areas that will be served utilizing Rural Development Opportunity Funds (RDOF)?
- We were awarded almost a million dollars, that's Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Some of that, well all of that is for Vanderburgh County. There is one million dollars that was awarded in addition to us committing to our own private capital. That will include some of these passings that were on the map that we've identified in the KMZ file. Can we include that in our response to the RFP?
    - The applicant is encouraged to show these coverage areas and clearly describe the relationship between RDOF funds, Vanderburgh County Rural Broadband funds (this RFP), and applicant's capital contribution. However, the County desires proposals that are not “subject to” any other sources of outside funding provided by the applicant.
19. Section 3 of the RFP states that approximately 35% of the County does not have access to a fixed broadband solution. How was this number determined and is there any background data the Counties can share to help us identify these locations?
- This is only an estimate. There is no hard data to support this number.
20. Is the RFP limited to the provision of service in the unserved addresses identified in the RFP?
- No. Those addresses were provided solely to assist applicants in the preparation of their proposals.
21. Is there a map showing what is actually underserved in the county, or is it sort of a broad brush of everything outside Evansville and the other towns?
- The only map available is the .kmz file mentioned in the RFP.
22. Is the expectation in the RFP that the respondent will define what they believe to be the underserved areas?
- Along that same line, if it turns out that you were looking for the respondent to define their belief of the underserved/unserved area, would there also be documentation required to prove that or is it just that?

- i. **At this time, it is not expected that an applicant provide documentation or validation of underserved areas.**
23. Is Vanderburgh willing to share data sets indicating existing fiber and broadband infrastructure, network routes, and service providers servicing the county needs as well as its businesses and residents with served area? Can it provide penetration rates or service addresses passed with fiber assets?
  - a. **This information is not known or will not be provided.**
24. How many service addresses does Vanderburgh County anticipating requiring FTTP not presently served, and did it contemplate a specific timeline by which it desired to cover those service addresses?
  - a. **This information is not known or will not be provided.**
25. Would Vanderburgh County be willing to consider as part of the build out making a commitment to use appropriate services for its only internal IT requirements and needs? If so, could a responder who requests it get a list of site connectivity and layer 1 services?
  - a. **The current RFP is solely focused on the purpose and objectives described in Section 2. Anything beyond has not been contemplated at this time.**
26. Does Vanderburgh County have a 5 year technology roadmap/plan that it can share include any specific "Smart County Initiatives."
  - a. **This information is not known or will not be provided.**
27. Does the County anticipate partnering with its selected party to serve as its anchor customer for a layer 2-3 services?
  - a. **This is currently not anticipated.**
28. Does the County own any rights to the pole infrastructure?
  - a. **No.**
29. Does Vanderburgh County maintain a specific amount earmarked for financing of this build out?
  - a. **Refer to response to question #2.**
30. Does the County anticipate applying for and receive financing assistance through grants, federal programs, bond issuance or other vehicles? If so, which programs does it plan to leverage or apply for assistance and can it provide general estimate on what it expected to qualify as part of its effort to fulfill this broadband initiative?
  - a. **American Rescue Plan Act funding is currently the targeted funding source. Other sources may be available, whether local, state, or federal. The County desires to enter into a contract as described in Section 2.7 and for the project to be deployed as described in Section 4.7.**
31. Has the County been conditionally or fully approved through any specific program?

- a. This depends on the proposals received and the types of technology/solutions proposed.
32. Has Vanderburgh County shared its vision and worked with city officials, school districts, and the private sector to enhance its overall community technology plan?
  - a. Yes.
33. Is Vanderburgh County open to execute a long-term lease for access to its chosen partners network and agreement to exclusivity of marketing and sales of that infrastructure by the winning responder?
  - a. Refer to response to question #25.
34. Can the County provide a diagram of any and all of its telecommunication structures used to host equipment within service areas? Would it consider allowing its selected partner to host its equipment servicing this network in some or all of those structures?
  - a. This information is not known or will not be provided.
35. Specific amount of ARPA funds earmarked for this project and any sub entry based on equipment, consulting, share any documents on budgeting and use of ARPA maps? Approved by administrator for deployment of this network?
  - a. Refer to response to question #2.
36. Does the County Preference for wireline versus wireless connectivity, does sourcing g contemplates such difference in terms of network quality, reliability, etc.
  - a. Please refer to the rating criteria in Section 6.
37. County contemplate as part of this bid also providing or moving its services to this particular service provide as part of the arrangement?
  - a. The current RFP is solely focused on the purpose and objectives described in Section 2. Anything beyond has not been contemplated at this time.
38. Would the county consider any joint planning with school district, libraries, or other utilities with regard to this project?
  - a. The current RFP is solely focused on the purpose and objectives described in Section 2. Anything beyond has not been contemplated at this time.
39. What files does the County possesses relative to service addresses presently underserved and mix between business and residential? Would the county be willing to share such files?
  - a. The .kmz file provided is the only address specific data the County has.
40. What other recovery fee mechanisms does or has the County contemplated to augment ARPA funding?
  - a. Refer to response to question #15.

41. Is Vanderburgh County available to provide a list of pole owners we might need to engage to create pole attachment agreements? How do or will installations and obtain easements be coordinated?
- a. **This due diligence is the responsibility of the ISP.**
42. Is Vanderburgh County able to provide what other utility owners have structures (ariel or underground) in the public right of way with the County and underserved areas?
- a. **This information is not known or will not be provided.**
43. Can Vanderburgh County provide GIS data regarding the addressable locations (lat/long, physical address, including community name, # number of living units?)
- a. **The .kmz file provided is the only address specific data the County has.**