

Eaton County Broadband Wired Infrastructure Expansion RFP Clarifications

1. Is the County limiting RFP funding to unserved and underserved areas only? i.e. No overbuilding

Answer: Yes, the county is limiting any potential funding for the project to unserved and underserved defended areas. These areas may change based on new data potentially coming 4th quarter of 2022. The intent is to NOT provide funding for overbuilding areas.

2. How will the County score the number of points for fiber infrastructure versus hybrid-fiber coaxial?

Answer: All proposals will be considered during the scoring process. Bidders are encouraged to provide a detailed proposal as outlined in Section 7.3 of the RFP that clearly define which parts of the proposed infrastructure will be coaxial in any hybrid solution.

3. Is the County's expectation that as long as the applicant has one or more speed tiers that are at or above 100Mbps download and 20 Mbps upload, an applicant is in compliance with the RFP guidelines?

Answer: Yes, it is the expectation of the county that if a provider offers speed tiers that are at or above 100Mbps download and 20 Mbps upload, the applicant is in compliance with the RFP guidelines. These speed tiers also need to be available for the entire bid zone.

4. Will an applicant be penalized if they also offer a few tiers below 100Mbps/20Mbps if they also have tiers that meet or exceed 100Mbps/20Mbps?

Answer: No penalties will be given as long as there is an offering of a minimum of 100Mbps/20Mbps with a fixed wired connection. Pricing for speed tiers will be considered during the scoring process.

5. If an applicant wants to include different options such as one option for all bid zones, several bid zones, or different bid zones individually; should those be broken down into separate applications or may those options be included in one response?

Answer: Each vendor should submit one bid response. A bid response may include multiple Bid Zone proposals. The only exception is that a separate proposal may be submitted for Carmel Township exclusively, should bidders elect to propose a project for the unserved area within its jurisdiction.

6. Is the County willing to allow applicants to seek future federal or state grant funding as part of its response and thusly only beginning construction once that funding is procured?

Answer: Yes, the county is anticipating applicants to seek out other federal or state grant opportunities. The proposed timeline of construction should follow the timetable defined by the grant funding opportunity identified.

7. Are there County funds available to help pay for infrastructure costs?

Answer: The county will determine the level of funding based on proposed investment and how to effectively maximize state/federal funding opportunities.

8. Will the County be providing a shapefile of the Townships on the Exhibit A map?

Answer: Yes, a series of shapefiles will be provided on our website.

9. What is the status of the “uncolored areas on Exhibit B? Are these areas excluded from the RFP?

Answer: Exhibit B unshaded areas are city/village boundaries. These areas should be considered if the applicant deems them unserved/underserved.

10. Will the County be provided the lat/long or shapefile for the target addresses in Exhibit C spreadsheet?

Answer: Yes, a shapefile will be posted to our website containing the target addresses represented in Exhibit C spreadsheet.

11. County requests proposals for the County-wide targeted addresses based on proposals received from one or several ISPs, as well as a separate plan to served targeted addresses in Carmel Township. Does this mean that an ISP can submit a proposal for the entire county, or can also submit any number of proposals for subsets of the county which do not necessarily cover the entire county? And, if desired an ISP can also submit a proposal for the entire Carmel Township list of addresses?

Answer: Each vendor should submit one bid response. A bid response may include multiple Bid Zone proposals. The only exception is that a separate proposal may be submitted for Carmel Township exclusively, should bidders elect to propose a project for the unserved area within its jurisdiction.

12. How much subsidy does Eaton County have to fund this RFP?

Answer: The county will determine the level of funding based on proposed investment and to maximize state/federal funding opportunities.

13. How much subsidy does Carmel Township have to fund the RFP?

Answer: The Carmel Township board has approved up to \$100,000 towards partnering with this project.

14. If an ISP wishes to provide a separate bid for Carmel Twp, as well as other areas of the county, do they submit a separate RFP response for each area, or simply call out the separate bids within the same RFP response for the County (i.e. a single RFP submission or several RFP submissions)?

Answer: Each vendor should submit one bid response. A bid response may include multiple Bid Zone proposals. The only exception is that a separate proposal may be submitted for Carmel Township exclusively, should bidders elect to propose a project for the unserved area within its jurisdiction.

15. I'm seeking clarification on one area, there is currently at least one company that has received funding under the Rural Development Opportunity Fund (RDOF) and plans to build a fixed wireless network in a portion of Eaton Co. The Michigan Broadband office has indicated that areas that have received funding under prior federal and/or state programs for Broadband will not be eligible for BEAD funding. However, the Eaton Co. RFP specifies Wired Infrastructure Expansion. How does an ISP, when developing a strategy for responding to the RFP, address the conflict between the wired infrastructure RFP and the lack of available funding in the RDOF area due to a wireless project?

Answer: It is up to the applicant to identify the Rural Development Opportunity Fund (RDOF) funded areas of Eaton County. It is the intent of the county to NOT provide potential funding to proposals offering overbuilding.