

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

BROADBAND IMPROVEMENT IMPLEMENTATION

**TOWN OF CHESTERFIELD
490 ROUTE 63
CHESTERFIELD, NH 03443**

NOVEMBER 28, 2018

1. DESCRIPTION

The Town of Chesterfield is currently accepting proposals to improve broadband coverage in Town to the unserved locations as defined by RSA 38:38, I(c). An unserved location is defined as a location that does not have access to at least 25 Mbps download/3 Mbps upload speeds. The location does not need to be subscribing to this service, but the service must be available at the street location (State or Town Road).

The Town currently has very uneven broadband access availability and speeds. About 18% of the town does not have the availability of 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload speeds (FCC spec). This number drops to about 15% of the town if one sets the reference at 20 Mbps. Most of the current town service is from three providers (Comcast, Argent, and Consolidated) with some other providers supplying service for a handful of locations (for example, WiValley). Other providers, such as satellite and cell companies are removed from this consideration since they have significant download cap limitations that make them unsuitable for practical use in homes and businesses. Once these caps are reached, service falls significantly below the FCC spec, usually 1-3 Mbps. Figure 1 shows a summary of the best coverage available from all providers to residents. This can be found with greater detail at:

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1po1hUmDJxXH44NJx2DWP_0qtXVrIZ-h&usp=sharing

In mid 2016, the Town had a study performed to evaluate the terrestrial wireless option to provide coverage to the unserved residents in town. The study was performed by Fred Goldstein of the Interisle Consulting Group and is available as public record on the Town website at:

<https://chesterfield.nh.gov/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Broadband-Report.pdf> .

Also available, on request, is a spreadsheet showing the cost analysis (both capital and operational) of the proposal, assuming service is provide to only the currently unserved residents. At the beginning of the study, less than 5% of the town had the availability of 25 Mbps service. While the study was occurring, several local providers significantly improved their broadband offerings to 25Mbps service so that over 80% of the town now has this available. These improvements only helped a few of the unserved residents (<10Mbps) in town.

Also in 2016, a survey was performed concerning broadband coverage in the Town that included people's experiences and desires. This can be informative and found at

<https://chesterfield.nh.gov/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Broadband-Survey-Report.pdf>

2. BUSINESS MODEL: GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS OF TOWN

The Town is soliciting proposals to further improve broadband coverage in the town to specifically address the needs of the unserved population. The Town's desire is to form a partnership(s) with one or more providers that address this goal. The Town does not want to operate or be an owner of the system.

- **Both wired and wireless** technologies will be considered.
- Proposals should break down costs for each specific unserved area and Provider should be willing to accept project by specific unserved area. For example, Town may accept multiple providers to serve different unserved areas of Town. However, the preference is to partner with a single provider.
- The Town is willing to work with any and all providers with regards to siting equipment, e.g. poles on town right of way or distribution equipment.
- Proposals are to include costs to provide service at the "street level" and should not include the cost of going from the street to the final location. The "street level" only includes State and Town roads; Private roads coverage will be the responsibility of the owners of those roads.
- The town is not willing to fund plans or parts of plans to provide service to those areas already having 25Mbps service available from other providers. However, providers are free to compete in those areas of town with their own funding, and with cooperation of the Town with regards to right-of-way access.
- The Town is willing to consider funding improvements to existing service providers for served areas if a case can be made for significantly improving overall system reliability.

The Town of Chesterfield is following the requirements of New Hampshire SB 170 in order to pursue the option of the Town Bonding upgrades to the Broadband infrastructure to meet the 25/3 specification. This allows for the Town to Bond and enter into a public-private partnership for these improvements. Since the Town would fund and Bond improvements, there are some requirements of the Bonding Bank and the State to do this. The most significant is the requirement that the Town own the Bonded assets until the Bond is paid off. After the Bond is paid off, the Town would be willing to transfer these assets to the partner in the agreement. This transfer may be at no cost or some previously agreed on price. These "buyout" provisions need to be part of the proposal.

Once bids are received, the Board of Selectman will review these proposals and select the partner or partners to work with. Final approval and acceptance of the Bid must be done at Town Meeting where a Bonding Article will have to be accepted by the Town voters. Several Hearings are required before this goes to Town vote. Town Meeting is scheduled for the middle of March 2019.

3. PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

All proposals must be submitted by the Response date: **11:00 AM EST, December 28, 2018.**

Include within each proposal package:

- A letter of transmittal with the name, signature and title of the person authorized to commit the Bidder to the proposal terms;

- Five (5) hard copies of the proposal;
- One electronic version of the proposal as an attachment in Adobe Acrobat (pdf format).

Address to: Town Administrator
PO Box 175
Chesterfield, NH 03443

Email: townadmin@nhchesterfield.com

Contact Brad Roscoe by email (baroscoe@gmail.com) with any questions about submitting the proposal.

The Town reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to waive any defect or informality in the proposals received and to accept the proposal deemed to be most favorable to the best interests of the Town, including, but not limited to, bidder qualifications, project cost, project size, schedule, and Business model.

Approval of a proposal requires the acceptance by the Board of Selectman and the Town Voters at the Annual Town Meeting in March.

In addition to the above requirements, proposals must include:

- Description of the Technology to be used and how it meets the requirements.
- Cost to install to the Street level for each specified unserved area of Town.
- Approximate timeline for installation. This should include estimates for tasks that may or may not be fully under providers control, such as “make ready requirements” or easements. List of easements or approvals required from third parties.
- Cost of monthly service for different performance specifications including rental of all equipment and if there is a time commitment for such pricing. If data caps are part of the service, these must be specified and should be high enough that a family of 4, with students, will not reach them.
- Cost of installation from “street” to residence. This can include a per foot charge.
- Guarantees of service call response times.
- Buyout provisions of Town investment after Bond paid off.
- Credentials of Provider: Examples and references to other systems installed and managed.
- Contract recommendations/requirements for bidder to work with Town.

Proposals do not need to address all of the unserved population of Town, but do need to serve a significant portion of them.

All contractual terms and conditions will be subject to review by the Town of Chesterfield’s Attorney and will include scope, budget, schedule, and other necessary items pertaining to the project. The town has a right to accept or refuse any/all proposals.

4. TIMELINE

The desire is to have acceptable proposal(s) ready in time for Town Meeting in March of 2019. Proposals will be reviewed in early January with acceptance goal of a proposal(s) by January 18, 2019. Some discussion with bidders may or may not occur concerning their bids during this time frame.

5. PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Town of Chesterfield will evaluate all proposals based on the following criteria. To ensure consideration for this Request for Proposal, your proposal should be complete and include all of the following criteria:

- Overall proposal suitability: proposed outlines must meet the scope and needs included herein and be presented in a clear and organized manner
- Organizational Experience: Organizations will be evaluated on their experience as it pertains to the scope of this project
- Previous work: Organizations will be evaluated on examples of their work as well as client testimonials and references
- Value and cost: Organizations will be evaluated on the cost of their solution(s) based on the work to be performed in accordance with the scope of this project
- Technical expertise and experience: Organizations must provide descriptions and documentation of staff technical expertise and experience

1. Proposal Elements

Proposals must include the information set forth below:

- a. Letter of transmittal, signed by an individual authorized to bind the Bidder contractually, certifying that the Bidder will, if awarded a contract, execute contracts in accordance with the terms of the proposal within a reasonable time.
- b. The Bidder's qualifications demonstrating the skill, ability and integrity necessary to faithfully perform the work required, including any those of any subcontractors proposed to be used by the Bidder. Such qualifications shall include a description of the Bidder's project experience, including project name, location and project costs, a brief description of the project, the firm's role in the project, project team member roles in the project, a project reference and contact phone number.
- c. Bidder's proposed Project design.
- d. Bidder's proposed Business model.
- e. Anticipated Project schedule.
- f. Bidder's proposed insurance coverages.

2. Terms of RFP

Town Discretion: The Town reserves the right to cancel this RFP at any time, to reject any and all proposals, to waive any defect or informality in the proposals received and to accept the proposal deemed to be most favorable to the best interests of the Town.

No Costs: This solicitation does not obligate the Town or any other person associated with the Project to pay any costs incurred by Bidders in preparing and submitting a proposal.

No express or implied services: This solicitation does not obligate the Town or any other person associated with the Project to accept or contract for any expressed or implied services.

Bidder duty to examine: Submission of a proposal shall be conclusive evidence that the Bidder has examined the Premises and the contract documents and is familiar with all the conditions of this procurement. Upon finding any omissions or discrepancy in the proposal documents, the Bidder shall notify the Town immediately so that any necessary addenda may be issued. Failure of the Bidder to completely investigate the Premises and/or to be thoroughly familiar with the contract documents (including plans, specifications and all addenda) shall in no way relieve the Bidder from any obligation with respect to the proposal. Bidder is responsible for verifying all statements in this RFP with the proper authorities.

Incomplete Proposal: Proposals that are incomplete, contain any omissions, erasures, alterations, additions or irregularities of any kind may be rejected, but the Group is not obligated to reject such proposals.

Proposal Withdraw or Modification: Any Bidder may withdraw or modify its Proposal by written request at any time prior to the Response Date. Telephonic proposals, amendments or withdrawals will not be accepted. Unless otherwise specified, no Proposal may be withdrawn for a period of sixty (60) days from the Response Date. The Town may waive minor informalities or allow the Bidder to correct them. The Town may permit a Bidder to withdraw a proposal if a mistake is evident on the face of the document but the intended correct offer is not similarly evident. Negligence on the part of the Bidder in preparing the Proposal confers no rights for the withdrawal of the Proposal after it has been opened.

Bidder Inquiries: All substantive inquiries from prospective Bidders concerning this RFP must be submitted via email with subject line “Chesterfield Broadband” to Brad Roscoe at baroscoe@gmail.com up to December 15, 2018 and may be shared with other prospective Bidders. All responses to substantive questions shall be via email and will be simultaneously distributed to all recipients of the RFP, and will be made available to all interested parties.

Selection of Successful Bidder: The Town shall evaluate all Proposals on the basis of the following criteria:

- a. Adequacy of Proposal:
 - i. Proposal timely submitted;
 - ii. Proposal complies with the RFP’s terms and conditions;
- b. Bidder Qualifications and Experience
- c. Project Design
- d. Business Model
- e. Project Schedule

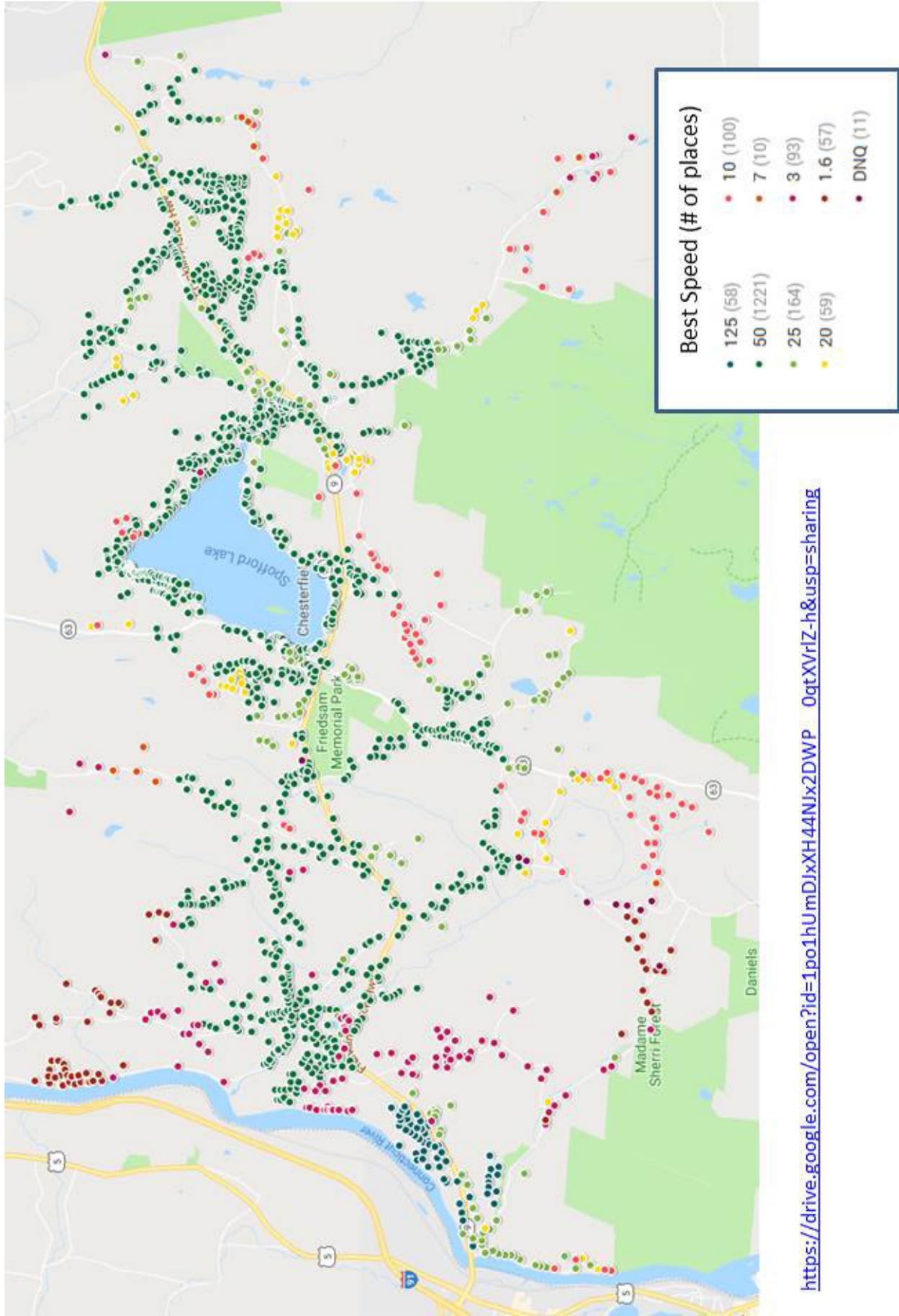
- f. Agreement with Contract terms
- g. Insurance

After opening of the bids, the Town may seek such additional information and enter into negotiation of contract terms as the Town, in its sole discretion, deems appropriate.

The Town is not obligated to select the lowest bid, the lowest responsible bid or follow any other criteria in selecting the successful bidder. The Town shall select the Proposal which in the Town's view, after evaluation of the qualifications of the Bidder and proposed design, Business model, and schedule, is most advantageous to the Town.

Final acceptance of the Bid requires the approval of the Board of Selectman, and the Town voters at the Annual Town Meeting held in mid-March 2019.

Chesterfield Broadband Coverage (Best Estimate) 11/16/2018



https://drive.google.com/open?id=1po1hUmDjxXH44NJx2DWP_QgtXVrIZ-h&usp=sharing