



## **Request for Information**

### **IMPROVING BROADBAND IN MOFFAT COUNTY COLORADO**

#### **RESPONSES DUE:**

Thursday, December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016 prior to 4:00 p.m.

Audrey Danner  
Moffat County Broadband Committee Co-Chairman

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# **REQUEST FOR INFORMATION for IMPROVING BROADBAND SERVICES in MOFFAT COUNTY, COLORADO**

## **BROADBAND PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS**

Moffat County, Colorado communities including Craig, Dinosaur, Hamilton, and Maybell, along with local funding partners Tri-State Generation and Transmission, Colorado Northwestern Community College, The Memorial Hospital, Yampa Valley Electric Association, and Danner Communications (“the Broadband Committee,”) have come together to study the current broadband services available in Moffat County and to study ways to improve broadband services. The intention of the study is not to diminish the hard work, the investments and the efforts that many of the communities have done to improve broadband services, but rather, to enhance and expand the efforts that are already underway. Specifically, we would like to hear from service providers that currently serve Moffat County. We would like to hear your suggestions on how we could collectively work together to solve broadband challenges. Additionally, we would like to hear from providers and companies that are not currently serving Moffat County on their ideas as well.

The Broadband Committee is committed to seeking partners in an initiative to bring world-class, high speed Internet infrastructure to homes, businesses and anchor institutions (“Last Mile Internet Services”) to the Moffat County region. The Broadband Committee seeks innovative private-sector business partners interested in co-investing, or building, operating and maintaining a high-speed network that will eventually be capable of offering up to Gigabit Internet services in the region.

Currently the Broadband Committee is undertaking a regional broadband planning effort that is funded in part by an Energy and Mineral Impact Assistance Fund (EIAF) grant awarded through the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA). The broadband planning effort is still underway and the responses to this Request for Information will be included in the regional broadband plan to improve broadband services availability, abundance, redundancy and affordability.

The purpose of this RFI is to extend an invitation to existing service providers, infrastructure owners, finance companies and other industry companies to partner with the Broadband Committee and its members in improving broadband services throughout Moffat County and the region. The primary questions posed within this RFI are – “How can we collectively work together to improve broadband services in Moffat County?” “What specific actions can the committee evaluate to improve services?” Also, “If key investments are made from various key stakeholder entities, grants and potential other partners, what would your company provide for either Middle Mile or for Last Mile Internet Services? Specifically, what investments should be made?” and, “What Public Private Partnership arrangements and structure would facilitate more investment in Last Mile Internet Services?”

Proposals will be accepted until 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 15<sup>th</sup>. Proposals must be emailed to the attention of Audrey Danner, [audreydanner@gmail.com](mailto:audreydanner@gmail.com) and (2) hard copies shall be delivered via mail to the following address:

Audrey Danner, Moffat Broadband Committee Co-Chair  
PO Box 1136  
Craig, CO 81626

Emailed proposals should contain the following in the subject line: *“Response to Improving Broadband Services in Moffat County.”*

Only proposals received by the deadline will be evaluated.

# SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

## A. General/Background

The Broadband Committee is committed to seeking partners in an initiative to bring world-class, high speed Internet infrastructure to the participating communities in Moffat County. The Broadband Committee and its members are seeking creative Public Private Partnerships with service providers to improve Middle Mile and Last Mile Internet Services throughout the Region.

The members of the committee see the importance of having next generation broadband services to manage their respective operations, and perhaps more importantly, see the need for next generation broadband as a way to spur economic development. Other communities that have improved broadband services and have already seen the tremendous economic impact of building broadband infrastructure. These communities have fostered an environment of innovation, economic development and growth, collaboration, and creative activities. Because access to advanced broadband services is a priority for businesses and entrepreneurs, the communities that have built advanced broadband networks have already benefited economically by attracting businesses and industries, in areas like manufacturing and technology, to re-locate to their communities.

Next generation broadband services offer many advantages. Having access to affordable, abundant, high capacity Internet is no longer a luxury. It is a necessity, like water and electricity. Having access to abundant broadband is critical for:

- creating more jobs,
- creating vibrant communities that are economically stable,
- providing for new opportunities,
- fostering an entrepreneurial-friendly environment,
- improving technology advancement,
- providing better access to educational opportunities and online learning applications,
- providing for better and less expensive healthcare,
- improving public safety and emergency management services
- better access to e-government services,
- facilitating more telework and telecommuting, and
- attracting the New Knowledge economy.

Advanced broadband networks are creating enormous shifts in local, state, national and global societies, as well as markets, business and in institutions around the world. Therefore, it is critical to have this infrastructure available to all citizens.

We want to receive input from the existing service providers that are already serving Moffat County and the neighboring counties. We also want to see what other potential partners may want to participate in this process.

From there, we will meet with key stakeholders within the community and look at options for key investments, partners, and strategies for improving broadband services.

## **B. Colorado Senate Bill 05-152 (SB-152)**

In 2005 the Colorado Legislature passed Colorado Senate Bill 05-152 (SB-152). This took away local governments' ability to compete with the private sector within the broadband marketplace including high-speed Internet, telecommunication and cable services. In essence, the law prohibits the use of municipal or county funds to be used to improve local broadband infrastructure and service.

Municipalities and local government entities can build out telecommunications infrastructure to other government entities (town hall, county offices, police, fire, ambulance, E-911 centers, etc.) and quasi-government entities (schools, libraries and hospitals). The network may be used by service providers to provide services to end users (homes and businesses) as long as the service provider's use of the network is insubstantial compared to government use. The term "insubstantial" is not defined in the law. Additionally, the law prohibits governments in entering into Public-Private Partnerships that are substantial (again, this term is not further defined) to provide telecommunications and broadband services.

The law also states that communities and counties can opt out of this law with a 50% majority vote from a public election. A simple yes or no referendum to secure voter approval allows a Colorado, town, city, county, etc. to opt out of this law.

In November, 2015, citizens within the City of Craig and Moffat County voted in favor of opting out of SB-152.

## **SECTION 2: INFORMATION NEEDED FROM RESPONDENTS**

Interested private and public sector businesses are encouraged to respond to this RFI. Responses from incumbent service providers, competitive service providers and public cooperatives will be considered. Responses will also be considered from all potential parties interested in offering innovative construction and operation financial models. Responses do NOT need to include offering services to all areas within Moffat County; however, preferences for responses are to address all communities and counties.

We do realize that the technology solution or financial model may differ for various communities and parts of the county. It is also our intention to potentially select one or many providers and their respective solutions.

**A. Objectives:** There are several objectives central to the Broadband Committee’s project. Respondents to the RFI should indicate how they can help the Broadband Committee meet these objectives:

1. Provide high-speed Internet network connectivity to business and residential customers to all communities/counties based on an architecture that will scale to meet access demands for the next twenty years and allow extension of the network to additional locations.
2. Offer appropriately scaled Internet services (i.e., transfer rates meeting the current and future needs as determined by the customer) to any customer connected to the high-speed Internet network.
3. Provide a highly reliable, scalable and available network.
4. Provide competitive pricing for high speed Internet services to eventually include synchronous gigabit transfer rates.
5. Provide excellent customer service.

### **SECTION 3: PREPARATION AND SUBMITTAL OF PROPOSALS**

#### **Anticipated Schedule**

- Request for Proposal available November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- Inquiry deadline, no questions after this date December 2<sup>nd</sup> by 4:00 p.m. MST
- Submittal deadline for proposals December 15<sup>th</sup> by 4:00 p.m. MST

**Submission:** Each proposal shall include **Two (2) hard copies** placed in a sealed envelope and marked clearly on the outside **“Improving Broadband in Moffat County”**. to the following address:

Attention: Audrey Danner, Moffat Broadband Committee Co-Chair  
PO Box 1136  
Craig, CO 81626

and **one (1) electronic copy** emailed to Audrey Danner at [audreydanner@gmail.com](mailto:audreydanner@gmail.com).

**The electronic copy shall be an exact reproduction of the original documents provided. All sections shall be combined into a SINGLE ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT (pdf format preferred).**

**Please provide the following information in your response.**

- A. Cover Letter:** Cover letter shall be provided which explains the Firm's interest in the project. The letter shall contain the name/address/phone number/email of the person who will serve as the firm's principal contact person with Owner's Contract Administrator and shall identify individual(s) who will be authorized to make presentations on behalf of the firm.
- B. Company Background and Overview.**
- C. Specific Actions Recommended by Your Firm:** Please provide a response from your company to the following questions.
1. Describe the current network facilities your company currently has in Moffat County if any.
  2. What investments or upgrades, if any, does your company plan to make in the next two years within Moffat County?
  3. What services, service levels and pricing does your company offer for residential and business/commercial users?
  4. What key investments should the Broadband Committee consider to help your company improve its broadband services within Moffat County? Please provide description of your company's plans to upgrade and/or improve broadband services within the County. Detail any capital costs and improvements your company is planning to make with or without the collaboration with the stakeholders of this project. Provide detailed information regarding the technology, capacity and capabilities of these improvements.
  5. What other initiatives should the Broadband Committee consider to help improve broadband services within Moffat County?
  6. What would your company provide, or further do if these key investments and other initiatives were implemented?
  7. How would your company propose working with the members of the committee in a public private partnership?
- D. Network Maps.** Provide a description and maps of your company's existing fiber optic facilities, tower locations, microwave, wireless access points and and/or conduit located within the County and region. Provide a description of and maps of your company's existing facilities. An electronic .kmz file is preferred. Maps and other proprietary information presented in the proposal can be marked as "Proprietary and Confidential" and will not be available to the public.
- E. Additional Data (optional):** Provide any additional information that will facilitate the committee's goals.

## SECTION 4: EVALUATION CRITERIA AND FACTORS

**Evaluation:** The Broadband Committee shall review and consider all responses.

## SECTION 5: REQUIREMENTS

**Altering Proposals:** Any alterations made prior to opening date and time must be initialed by the signer of the proposal, guaranteeing authenticity. Proposals cannot be altered or amended after submission deadline.

**Exclusion:** No oral, telegraphic, or telephonic proposals shall be considered.

**Questions and Addenda:** If your Firm has questions, all questions shall be submitted in writing to Audrey Danner by email at [audreydanner@gmail.com](mailto:audreydanner@gmail.com) no later than 4:00 p.m. MST on December 2<sup>nd</sup>. Responses to the questions submitted will be posted on Bidnet at [www.rockymountainbidsystem.com](http://www.rockymountainbidsystem.com). Offerors shall acknowledge receipt of all addenda in their proposal.

**Confidential Material:** All materials submitted in response to this RFI shall ultimately become public record and shall be subject to inspection after contract award. “**Proprietary or Confidential Information**” is defined as any information that is not generally known to competitors and which provides a competitive advantage. Unrestricted disclosure of proprietary information places it in the public domain. Only submittal information clearly identified with the words “*Confidential Disclosure*” and placed in a separate envelope shall establish a confidential, proprietary relationship. Any material to be treated as confidential or proprietary in nature must include a justification for the request. If denied, the proposer shall have the opportunity to withdraw its entire proposal, or to remove the confidential or proprietary restrictions. Neither cost nor pricing information nor the total proposal shall be considered confidential or proprietary.

**Response Material Ownership:** All proposals become the property of the Owner upon receipt and shall only be returned to the proposer at the Owner’s option. Selection or rejection of the proposal shall not affect this right. The Owner shall have the right to use all ideas or adaptations of the ideas contained in any proposal received in response to this RFI, subject to limitations outlined in this section under “Confidential Material”. Disqualification of a proposal does not eliminate this right.

**Open Records:** Proposals shall be received and publicly acknowledged at the location, date, and time stated herein. Offerors, their representatives and interested persons may be present. Proposals shall be received and acknowledged only so as to avoid disclosure of process. However, all proposals shall be open for public inspection after the contract is awarded. Trade secrets and confidential information contained in the proposal so identified by offer as such shall be treated as confidential by the Owner to the extent allowable in the Open Records Act.

**Sales Tax:** the Broadband Committee is, by statute, exempt from the State Sales Tax and Federal Excise Tax; therefore, all fees shall not include taxes.

**Public Disclosure Record:** If the bidder has knowledge of their employee(s) or sub-Bidders having an immediate family relationship with a Owner employee or elected official, the bidder must provide the Purchasing Representative with the name(s) of these individuals. These individuals are required to file an acceptable "Public Disclosure Record", a statement of financial interest, before conducting business with the Owner.

*End of Document*