**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

**DOWNTOWN PUBLIC WI-FI NETWORK**

**DILLSBORO, NC**

# 31 August 2023

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS DOWNTOWN PUBLIC Wi-Fi SERVICES

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| **Summary:** | The Town of Dillsboro is requesting proposals from qualified firms to create a public wireless (Wi-Fi) network within its Downtown Business and Recreation areas. The scope of services includes the following: (1) system design, (2) equipment and licensing provision, (3) Internet Service identification and/or provision, (4) installation, (5) the warranty necessary to create a public Wi-Fi network in the Downtown Business and Recreation areas, and (6) system monitoring, maintenance and upkeep. As identified in the Coverage Area Map (Attachment 1), the Town of Dillsboro has identified a priority project area (outlined in yellow) where the provision of Wi-Fi is the focus of this Request for Proposals. The system is expected to provide a strong signal to the outdoor areas of the entire coverage area with service to the inside of buildings within the Downtown being a desirable feature but not the primary focus of the project. |
| **Key Dates:** |  |
| * Proposals Due: | 20 September 2023 (fax not accepted)  5:00 PM (EST)  Anne Wade  125 Bonnie Lane  Sylva, NC 28779 |
| * **Award of Contract:** | 09 October 2023 |
| * **Contact:** | Anne Wade  [anne@regiona.org](mailto:anne@regiona.org)  125 Bonnie Lane  Sylva, NC 28779 |
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**DOWNTOWN WIRELESS SERVICES**

# PROFESSIONAL SERVICES REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

1. **INTRODUCTION**

The Town of Dillsboro (“Town”) is seeking proposals from qualified respondents interested in providing the services as described in this request for proposals (“RFP”). The primary purpose of the Downtown Wi-Fi is to promote economic development in the Downtown by providing dependable and free Internet access to the General Public.

# PROJECT PURPOSE

The system will provide no-fee public access to the Internet within the coverage area and will be able to accommodate needs of patrons to Downtown area businesses, citizens, students, and numerous special event attendees in roughly 7 annual events. The system will additionally serve patrons at Monteith Park and the Dillsboro Launch Park. The Town intends to have a portal page for system access, which may be used to facilitate the dissemination of Town news and information. The system is intended to support “casual” usage. Therefore, Downtown businesses should not view the system as providing service inside private buildings as an alternative to commercially available Internet access for ongoing business or residential needs.

# PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The objective of the Downtown Wireless project is to provide standard 802.11b/g Wi-Fi access to business and consumer class Wi-Fi devices found in notebook computers, tablets, and smartphones, and other devices. The primary use will be to provide a free “Wi-Fi Hot Zone.”

This project is funded through the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), the Jackson County Tourism Development Authority (TDA), and the Town of Dillsboro. This project is subject to all federal, state, and local grant requirements.

The outdoor coverage area is defined in Attachment A. Although no estimate can be provided as to the expected service loads, it will be incumbent upon the vendor to provide user and packet prioritization to ensure guaranteed adequate bandwidth for system use. The system must support roaming capabilities within the coverage area on a symmetrical 100MB internet connection with expandable sizes acceptable for a special event. Proposals should include estimates for the number of client connections per zone, maintaining a preferred connection speed of 2Mbps.

The proposing firm shall include plans to assume maintenance, support, administration, and management of the Wi-Fi network, and to comply with a potential, to-be-negotiated Service Level Agreement.

Management capabilities of the Wi-Fi network must include software utilities to administer and manage user sessions, as well as the ability to create and manage a portal page. The management utilities should also include the ability to set connection time limits for clients, 20 minutes for example, to help maintain network use integrity. Network management capabilities should also include the ability to track and report anonymous use statistics. These statistics will support the ability to analyze and track system performance and provide metrics for system improvements.

While the scope of this project is specific to the Downtown and park locations, this project may be used as a measure for future wireless initiatives, which may involve further additional hot zones. It is imperative that the proposed system is scalable, and that the proposal includes that expansion path.

The qualified firm will propose a solution and equipment that would best meet the Town’s stated goals.

# PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

## Aesthetics

All equipment (access points, antennas, customer-premises equipment (CPEs), power supplies, etc.) should not negatively impact the appearance of publicly visible areas, and Town-owned property.

## Frequency Coordination and RF Analysis

The Town will assume that any design planning will incorporate analysis of existing RF frequencies and signal strengths, enabling frequency coordination with existing Wi-Fi networks and the proactive design and maintenance of equipment. The Town may arrange vendor access to Town-owned facilities to facilitate site surveys.

## Security

Proposed equipment must offer the latest security methods utilizing industry-standard technologies. The system must be upgradeable by way of firmware, software, or ROM upgrades as new security technologies are standardized.

## Back Haul ISP

The Town does not currently have Town-provided Internet service in the coverage area. The Town expects that the proposal will include options for acquiring or providing Internet service for the Wi-Fi network.

## Performance and Reliability

Any implemented network should maintain a minimum of 95% uptime of any managed device and connectivity. The proposed coverage area should have less than 10% geographic gap coverage of little to no signal strength, while maintaining average latency levels to not exceed 50-70ms. The system must have “self-healing” capabilities in the event of device failure, “hangs,” or connectivity problems. Contact and support numbers and information will be provided to report and escalate outages and/or other unanticipated network issues.

## Physical Requirements

All outdoor equipment must operate in an ambient temperature range of -40 degrees to +140 degrees Fahrenheit, have enclosure and cable connections that are weatherproof and able to withstand shock and vibration and high wind speeds.

## Orientation

The proposing firm will provide orientation that will properly prepare Town staff in the use, management services and any planned and unplanned maintenance.

## Warranty and Post Implementation Support

The proposing firm will provide manufacturer and vendor warranties on equipment and installation services covering firmware, hardware and software.

# SCOPE OF SERVICES

Vendors must submit a detailed scope of work outlining the project plan, tasks, scheduling, and milestone events. In general, the Town anticipates a “turnkey” full-service process. To that end, services are expected to include, at a minimum, the following:

* + System design
  + All necessary equipment including access points, antennas, CPEs, power supplies, etc.
  + Suitable locations for mounting equipment. (Please note: the selected bidder will be required to work with, and receive approval from, the Town’s Clerk and other departments for the use of Town infrastructure for the mounting of equipment. Further, the Town will provide as much assistance as possible in negotiating potential infrastructure locations involving Downtown businesses.)
  + All installation services for all equipment (The vendor will be responsible for securing any required permits, if applicable; these may be no-fee permits.)
  + All necessary software and latest firmware updates
  + All necessary testing to assure acceptable service in the coverage area
  + Provision and management of the manufacturer’s warranty
  + Any necessary training to Town staff
  + Options for back haul Internet service for the Wi-Fi network
  + Post-installation support of the system, as needed

# ORGANIZATION OF THE PROPOSAL

The organization of the proposed scope of work is described in this section. The proposal shall be limited to 10 pages, exclusive of pre-printed resumes, and similar material that the proposing firm believes will aid in determining its qualifications for the project. The following guidelines must be followed by all potential consultants.

1. General Provisions

Responses to this RFP must include the following information:

* 1. The name, address and telephone number of the proposing firm.
  2. Identification of the individuals and/or vendors comprising the project team for this project and what specific role each will take in completing the work.
  3. A summary of the firm’s experience completing similar projects. Please provide examples of the design, equipment and results of these projects. Also include any names, addresses and phone numbers of clients involved with these projects.
  4. Detailed work plan describing the firm’s approach to design, installation, testing and training. The description should, at a minimum, include a listing of manufacturers, including model numbers, for proposed equipment, subcontractors, and a project schedule.
  5. Description of the firm’s training program.
  6. Detailed warranty and support information.
  7. A detailed analysis of back haul Internet services options available to the Wi-Fi network.
  8. A detailed listing of fees and costs to complete the project with separate costs for equipment and labor.

1. Supplemental Materials

Vendors may provide any supplemental information or material not specifically required. Additional material may include the following:

* 1. Additional reports, photos and/or descriptions of similar projects the firm has completed.
  2. Promotional material describing your firm and its services.
  3. Additional references.
  4. Manufacturer literature.

1. Introduction

A general introduction and description of the proposed approach and methodology shall be provided. The introduction should include a statement of the firm’s approach to design problem solving as applicable to the Downtown Wi-Fi system. The format of the introduction and description of the approach is at the discretion of the firm.

1. Scope of Work

Describe the work program to accomplish the scope of work described above. The work program should address issues identified in the Project Description and Performance Expectations and shall provide a detailed description of the work to be accomplished. The organization of the specific work activities in the scope of work should be broken down into tasks, subtasks, and the anticipated result or output as follows:

TASK: An overview of a related group of subtasks or activities. Normally one or two sentences.

SUBTASK: A detailed description of the work, including the methodology to be performed. Generally, one to ten paragraphs depending upon the complexity of the activities described in the subtask.

OUTPUT: A description of what the result of this particular activity or subtask is.

Generally, one sentence.

1. Project Schedule

Describe the time schedule for each proposed task and subtask described above. Proposed work periods and completion dates, as well as anticipated meeting dates should also be identified.

1. Sub-consultants

List all sub-consultants proposed for this project. Include their resumes, qualifications, and specific responsibilities.

1. Relevant Experience

Provide the name and background information of each member of the firm who will perform the actual work described in the RFP and who will work with the Town on a regular basis. Additionally, provide the names and backgrounds of all other professional staff that will be working as part of your project team. An organizational chart should be included as well as resumes for each participating staff person.

Provide the relevant previous experience of the lead person for the project. Do not include work done by the firm that the lead person did not have a primary role in managing.

List at least three projects of a similar scope and nature to this proposal that the lead person from your firm had primary responsibilities including:

* 1. Project Address
  2. Reference (with telephone number)
  3. Year of Completion
  4. Brief written description of the project

The Town reserves the right to contact a proposing firm’s previous clients at any time.

1. Cost

Provide the total cost to complete the services described in Section III. The proposal should provide a breakdown of the costs based on the sections listed in the Scope of Services, including the cost to deploy the system within the area as defined by the Coverage Map. The Town reserves the right to exclude certain geographic locations from the final Scope of Work, based on the cost/benefit of system deployment, aesthetics, etc.

# SUBMITTAL OF THE PROPOSAL

1. Proposals may be submitted in an electronic Portable Document Format (PDF) or one original (reproducible and submitted in loose-leaf, letter sized 8.5” x 11” format, with numbered pages). The proposal must be received by 5:00 PM (EST) on 20 September 2023. Faxes will not be accepted. **Electronic submissions can be sent via e-mail to anne@regiona.org.**
2. All proposals, as well as any modifications, received at the Town after the hour and date specified above, will not be accepted. Postmarks are not accepted. All proposals will become the property of the Town and will not be returned.
3. The proposal shall be signed by an officer or officers authorized to execute legal documents on behalf of the Proposer and shall contain a statement to the effect that the proposal is a firm offer for a 60-day period.

# PROPOSAL ACCEPTANCE

Primary consideration will be given to the general appropriateness and adequacy of the proposal, the technical competence and creative ability of the consultants (as described in the proposal), and the firm’s willingness to work closely with Town Staff. The Town reserves the right to reject all proposals that are inappropriate or inadequate.

## Timeline for acceptance:

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| --- | --- |
| Written Proposals Due at 5:00 p.m. | 20 September 2023 |
| Selection Committee Recommendation | 27 September 2023 |
| Contract Negotiation with Successful Proposer | 27 September 2023 – 08 October 2023 |
| Committee Approval / Notice to Proceed | 09 October 2023 |
| Equipment Installed | 06 December 2023 |
| Service Available to Downtown | 30 December 2023 |
| Project Closeout | 30 June 2024 |

1. **TOWN REQUIREMENTS**

The contract will be awarded only to a responsible consultant. To qualify, a prospective consultant must meet the following standards, as they pertain to this Request for Proposals.

1. The Consultant must have adequate technical and financial resources and equipment for performance or have the ability to obtain and to manage such resources and equipment as required during the performance period of the proposed contract.
2. The Consultant must have the necessary experience, organization, technical qualifications, skills and facilities or have the ability to obtain and to manage them (including any sub-consultant requirements).
3. The Consultant must be able to comply with the proposed or required performance schedule.
4. The Consultant must have a satisfactory record of contractual performance.
5. The Consultant must maintain the auditable records, documents and papers for inspection by authorized Town representatives.
6. Each consultant firm must be able to provide insurance coverage as follows in conformance with the Town’s requirements:

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| --- | --- |
| 1) General Liability Insurance | $1,000,000 |
| 2) Automobile Insurance | $1,000,000 |
| 3) Workers Compensation Insurance | $1,000,000 |
| 4) Professional Errors and Omissions Insurance | $2,000,000 |

1. The Consultant must be otherwise qualified and eligible to receive an award under all applicable laws and regulations.

# TOWN CRITERIA FOR SELECTING A CONSULTANT

The Town’s criteria in selecting a consultant will include but is not limited to:

* + The firm’s background and capabilities, including history and areas of specialization, or particular expertise.
  + The background of the individuals who will do the actual design work and who will work with the Town on a regular basis.
  + The background of all consultants on the project team who are proposed to assist in the development of this project.
  + The relevant experience of the lead person for each firm on the project.
  + The firm’s expertise with similar projects.
  + The firm’s expertise in providing accurate and timely cost estimates.
  + The firm’s ability to provide a system design that meets the Town’s defined needs.
  + The firm’s ability to meet the Town’s schedule.
  + The firm’s ability to meet minimum guaranteed performance requirements and reliability.
  + The firm’s design of scalability or the seamless ability to easily increase capacity and coverage areas.
  + The firm’s ability to maintain the system.
  + Cost of the system.

# SELECTION PROCESS

All proposals are due on 20 September 2023.

A Committee of Town Staff and external partners will review the proposals and select firms.

The Town Committee will review and approve the Contract for Services at its meeting on 27 September 2023.

The Consultant will begin work following the signing of the Contract and filing of appropriate paperwork with the Town Clerk.

# LIMITATIONS

1. All reports and pertinent data or materials shall be the sole property of the Town, and may not be used or reproduced in any form without the explicit written permission of the Town.
2. The Town reserves the right to extend the time allotted for the proposal to examine verbally the bidder in person, and to request a best and final offer, should the Town deem that it is in its best interests to do so.
3. This Request for Proposals does not commit the Town to award a contract, or to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of the proposal. The Town reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received as a result of this Request for Proposals, to negotiate with any qualified consultant, or to cancel this request in part or in its entirety. The Town may require the selected Consultant to participate in negotiations and to submit such technical, price, or other revisions to their proposal as may result from negotiations

# ATTACHMENT

* 1. Coverage Area Map

Aerial view of a road

Description automatically generated

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