City of Joplin Missouri
Request for Information (RFI) - Partnership for a Citywide Fiber Optic Network
Addendum 1: Responses to Questions

Background: The City of Joplin, Missouri is seeking a partner interested in helping the City bring fiber-optic broadband to every home and business in the City. The intention of this RFI is to open a dialog with interested Internet Service Providers (ISPs) or other parties interested in helping the City to meet that goal. The City is open and encourages innovative ideas on how to fund and bring a fiber solution.

RFI Responses Due: No later than 5:00 PM CST on Friday, September 2, 2022

Question #1: Will copies of Respondents' responses to the RFI be available to obtain as public documents?

Answer #1: As a public entity, there might be public request(s) for RFI responses as we move along with the procurement process. If a request occurs, the City will redact proprietary and organizational information before distributing any response. As you develop your response, please denote the sections or components of the proposal as 'CONFIDENTIAL' and considered proprietary. Please refrain from providing a blanket confidential for your entire proposal.

Question #2: In formatting our response, under "General Requirements" please indicate which questions should be listed under Section 3 – Respondent Information, and which should be listed under Section 4 – Proposed Partnership, as several could go under either section.

Answer #2: We do not have a preference where General Requirements are addressed. Please structure your response as it makes sense for your proposed solution/approach.

Question #3: How can I get a copy of Joplin's Smart City roadmap?

Answer #3: The link is provided in the RFI and on City of Joplin's website - http://www.joplinmo.org/1124/Smarter-Joplin - which includes the roadmap and gap analysis as referenced in the RFI.

Question #4: Does the City have a list of addresses or locations of the facilities it would like connected to the private network mentioned in the RFI?

Answer #4: The City has chosen to use a Request for Information (RFI) as a market research tool for planning purposes to obtain market interest, understand capabilities, and explore different partnership models. Therefore, we are not providing this level of detail at this stage. As we move through the procurement process (which may include Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and/or Request for Proposal (RFP)) we will provide this information to interested parties.

Question #5: Does the city have a preference for how this private network will be delivered to them (i.e., Dark Fiber, Ethernet, or fully routed IP service)?

Answer #5: At this point, we have no preference and want to hear your ideas.

Question #6: If the City desires a dark fiber network they can light however they want, how many fibers would they like to have? If another technology, what sorts of performance would they like?

Answer #6: Please see the answer to Question #4.

Question #7: Other than the city facilities, are there other community anchor institutions, such as Joplin Schools, that have expressed an interest to the city to have their facilities connected to their own private fiber network?

Answer #7: Please see the answer to Question #4.

Question #8: Does the city own any existing fiber or empty conduit that could be used for part of this project?

Answer #8: Please see the answer to Question #4.

Question #9: Can you provide the Financial Analysis used to calculate the Network Capital Costs found in the Joplin Internet Broadband Gap Analysis Report dated October 6, 2021?

Answer #9: Please see the answer to Question #4.

Question #10: Is there a requirement or preference the fiber partnership with the City of Joplin to be an "Open-Access Network" as described on pages 136 – 139 of the Joplin Internet Broadband Gap Analysis Report dated October 6, 2021?

Answer #10: There is no preference/requirement for open-access or any other business structure. This might change as we move forward beyond the RFI.

Question #11: Please provide a definition of "Citywide open-access fiber network"?

Answer #11: This is undefined during the RFI stage. If you want the City to consider open access in the future, please tell us how you would want it to work.

Question #12: Would the selected partner and partnership structure with the City of Joplin have a requirement to build and be able to serve all residences and businesses within the City of Joplin?

Answer #12: Yes.

Question #13: Can you provide any details regarding the number and locations on the facilities the City wants to connect as stated in Section 2.7?

Answer #13: Please see the answer to Question #4.

Question #14: However, we do want to know if this will be our final opportunity to ask questions, (i.e. does this begin a quiet period in which we cannot reach out or discuss the particulars?) Also, can we see the Q&A from other potential applicants that I believe you will get out in a few days even though we did not ask a question?

Answer #14: This is the only opportunity during the RFI stage to submit questions. If the City chooses to move forward with other formal procurement processes (e.g., RFQ, RFP), interested parties will be able to ask questions again.

For this Q&A, we will send the comprehensive list of questions to you.

Question #15: While we may not be able to ask you questions, can we have conversations on aspects of the RFI after today? For example, can we advocate or speak on the RFI to you?

Answer #15: The City would like interested parties to participate in the established RFI and future structured procurement processes instead of engaging in discussions outside the procurement process.

Question #16: We are not an ISP. We are a developer of technologies. Should we respond to the RFI and ask for consideration to use our technologies or will we be excluded based on the above?

Answer #16: We are excited to understand what technologies exist to support the project. There are two ways in which you can present this to the City 1.) If you believe your solution can address the requirements of the RFI, please send a response or 2.) Please consider partnering with other organizations (all the major providers have awareness/access to this RFI).