

**Request for Proposals  
Private Partner for Construction, Deployment,  
Operation and Maintenance of  
County Broadband Internet Network  
RFP #15-0113B**



**Due Date: January 13, 2015  
2:00 P.M. (Local Time)**

**GARRETT COUNTY  
PURCHASING DEPARTMENT**

313 East Alder Street, Room 104  
Oakland, Maryland 21550

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**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL  
PRIVATE PARTNER for CONSTRUCTION, DEPLOYMENT,  
OPERATION and MAINTENANCE of COUNTY BROADBAND INTERNET NETWORK**

The Board of County Commissioners of Garrett County, Maryland will accept sealed RFP's to enable the County to identify one or more private partners interested in construction, deployment, operation and maintenance of Broadband Internet Network in key target areas of Garrett County as specified.

RFP documents and specifications may be obtained in person from the Garrett County Purchasing Department, 313 East Alder Street, Room 104, Oakland, Maryland 21550. A copy of the RFP documents can also be downloaded from the Purchasing Department's web site at <http://www.garrettcountry.org/purchasing/current-bids> Inquiries may be made by calling (301) 334-5003.

All interested respondents must submit a Letter of Intent to the Garrett County Purchasing Department on or before Friday, December 19, 2014 at 2:00 P.M. (local time). Sealed RFP's must be submitted to the Garrett County Purchasing Department, 313 East Alder Street, Room 104, Oakland, Maryland 21550 on or before Tuesday, January 13, 2015 at 2:00 P.M. (local time). All respondents are required to submit five (5) copies and an electronic copy or link of their RFP's documents at the time of submission. All RFP's submitted should be enclosed in a sealed envelope and clearly marked "Broadband Network RFP" on the outside of the envelope. Any RFP's received after the time due will not be considered and shall be retained as documentation for the RFP file.

The Board of County Commissioners of Garrett County, Maryland reserves the right to accept or reject any or all RFP's, to cancel this request for information and to waive technicalities in any part thereof deemed to be in the best interest of Garrett County.

By Order of the Board

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Brian E. Bowers".

Brian E. Bowers, CPPB  
Purchasing Agent  
Garrett County Purchasing Department

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## **1. Introduction**

Garrett County, Maryland seeks a qualified private partner (Partner) to construct, deploy, operate, and maintain a network to provide Broadband Internet Service to underserved residents and businesses in key target areas (Target Areas) of the County with the potential to serve as many as possible of the nearly 3,000 unserved and underserved homes and businesses.

Garrett County is a rural community in Western Maryland with many towns but no major cities. The County has a vibrant year-round tourism economy, a strong agricultural sector, and a growing business community.

County officials have prioritized pursuing access to affordable broadband networks on behalf of underserved and unserved residents who do not have access.

The funding provided by the County to the selected Partner will be designated for capital expenditures. The County will own any facilities constructed and equipment procured with the public funding and will give the Partner a long-term lease for exclusive use of the publicly-funded assets.

The County pooled local funds with grant funds provided by the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), and intends to make available to the selected Partner at least \$800,000 for the first two phases of the project. Additional funding of up to \$500,000 may be available for a third phase of the project, but will depend on ARC and County approval and is not guaranteed.

The Partner will have the opportunity to secure fiber-based backhaul services through the Maryland Broadband Cooperative (MDBC). MDBC operates two points of presence (POP) in the County. Other, commercial providers such as Shentel Cable also have facilities in the County that could provide backhaul services.

## **2. Goals of this Procurement**

Through this RFP, the County seeks a qualified private Partner to whom the County will provide partial funding to enable the Partner to design, build, operate, and maintain a terrestrial (i.e., not satellite) broadband Internet network to provide data services.

We welcome the response of incumbent Internet service providers, competitive providers, non-profit institutions, cooperatives, and entities that are not traditional Internet Service Providers, and are interested in offering service under innovative business models (application providers, as an example). We encourage collaboration among bidders as necessary to meet the goals of this RFP.

The County plans to make available to the selected Partner:

- (1) Funding for procurement and construction of the wireless infrastructure
- (2) A five-year or longer lease for the Partner to use the County-funded portion of the infrastructure
- (3) Warehouse space for the storage of equipment and other materials during the construction phase of the project
- (4) Support and assistance in permitting and navigation of other County processes
- (5) Support in negotiating access to bandwidth and/or dark fiber from the Maryland Broadband Cooperative or another provider for backhaul purposes
- (6) Where possible, access to County facilities for mounting wireless infrastructure and hosting equipment

The County's requirements with respect to the Partner are as follows:

Technical Goals: The County seeks a qualified Partner with the technical expertise and capacity to meet the functional requirements of the project: to make available broadband services to designated areas of Garrett County. This solicitation does not aim to dictate which technologies the Partner should select or build, but leaves it to the Partner to propose terrestrial (non-satellite) technologies that are suitable for deployment and able to reach the unserved areas in the hilly, sparsely populated areas of the County. We are of the opinion that TV White Space (TVWS) technology offers a promising last-mile option for this project. However, we will consider all reasonable responses to this RFP regardless of the suggested terrestrial technology, and will evaluate responses based on technical sufficiency and capability to meet the County's functional requirements as set forth in this RFP.

Financial Goals: The County seeks a Partner who is willing and financially able to share risk with the County in building and operating the proposed network; in other words, our selected Partner will utilize and benefit from the public funding and other public assets we make available, and will also commit its own resources to the project and will assume any financial risk over and above the public investment.

We will consider all reasonable responses to this RFP, and will evaluate responses based on the respondents' financial viability and willingness to meet the County's financial requirements for a Partner as set forth in this RFP. We invite you to convince us that you will be a reliable, viable partner. While we are not requiring a Commercial Contract Surety Bond from all bidders, any bidder who offers a Commercial Contract Surety Bond will receive the maximum credit under the Financial Viability criterion in scoring of the bids.

The County plans to fund last-mile network technology—potentially including wireless base station(s) and user electronics or other equipment—and provide it for use by the Partner through a long-term lease. We foresee a relationship in which the County assumes much of the financial risk with respect to the capital investment by allocating at least \$800,000 in the first two phases of the project, with the possibility of a third phase for which there may be additional funding of up to \$500,000. We seek to lower the barriers of market entry and development for the selected Partner, who will assume risk with respect to implementation and operations, with the benefit of our capital investment.

Given the usual lifespan of communications equipment, the County seeks a binding commitment from the selected Partner that it will operate and maintain the leased network for a minimum of five years, and will provide service availability and reasonable services to homes and businesses in the Target Areas of Garrett County for at least that time period.

Service Goals: The County seeks a Partner who will deliver services that meet the County's goals to provide service to any customer in the Target Areas, responding to the needs of businesses and residents in the Target Areas, and providing cost-effective services that are reasonably priced given the target market. The Partner will operate a network that is neutral with respect to applications, websites, type of use, and type of end-user device.

The Partner will also offer data services that do not place the same limitations, quotas, or caps on a user's total upload and download data capacity on a monthly as do mobile broadband providers. We seek proposals that do not include draconian aggregate caps because we believe that more access to broadband bandwidth is necessary to enable residents to benefit from Internet use. Many wireless service providers cap aggregate data usage and some then reduce the user's connection speed dramatically when the limit is reached; others charge considerable overage fees based on the additional data consumed.

Though wireless service providers may be able to increase these caps as their technologies improve, it is not clear whether the providers will choose to keep ahead of demand. It's our observation that many mobile wireless service providers cap total data use not for technical reasons but for business purposes and for

revenue generation. Any service provision that encourages users to be sparing in their data consumption is inconsistent with our network goals.

To enable the kinds of economically desirable activities we seek—such as home-based business, digital learning, and attracting residents and visitors to spend more time in Garrett County--the network business model should encourage more Internet use, rather than incenting customers to ration their consumption.

The Partner will also be open to working with the County to provide services to public sector users such as County workers for reasonable fees. The Partner will be willing to allow the County to add to the network as necessary to meet County service needs.

### **3. Background Regarding Garrett County and Broadband in the County**

Garrett County is a mostly rural community in Western Maryland. The County has a population of approximately 30,000. DSL, cable modem, and fiber wireline broadband services exist in the County, but due to the mountainous terrain and sparsely populated rural areas, significant portions of the County have limited or no terrestrial broadband service.

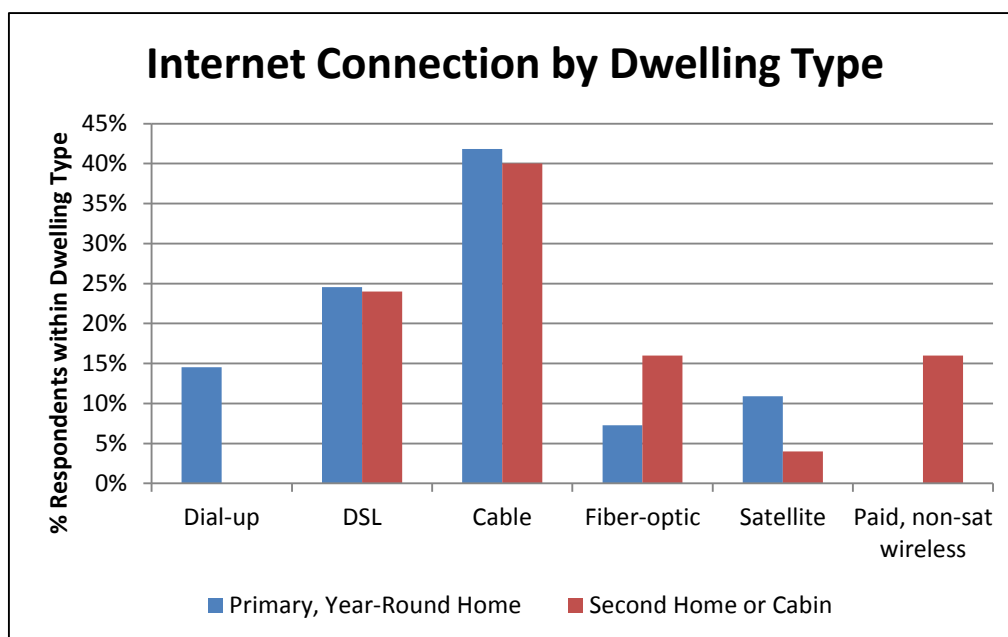
In 2011, Garrett County commissioned a study of the existing broadband landscape (Broadband Study).<sup>1</sup> The Broadband Study found that Garrett County is well served relative to comparable rural communities around the country, but nevertheless faces many challenges common to such communities—large unserved remote areas; relatively little competition in population centers; and high pricing that prevents consumers from fully benefiting from the networks where they do exist.

Given its lakes, state parks, mountains, and ski resort, Garrett County is a popular tourist destination, as well as a popular location for second home purchases. Over 20 percent of the residential respondents to the Broadband Study survey were second home-owners. The survey found that a significantly larger portion of residents of year-round homes rely on dial-up and satellite Internet service.

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<sup>1</sup> The Broadband Study was prepared for the Garrett County Office of Economic Development and the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) by CTC Technology & Energy in 2012 and can be found on both the County's website ([www.garrettcountry.org/dotcom/files/GarrettCountyBroadbandReport.pdf](http://www.garrettcountry.org/dotcom/files/GarrettCountyBroadbandReport.pdf)) and CTC's website (<http://www.ctcnet.us/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/GarrettCountyBroadbandReport.pdf>). The study included extensive surveys of the Garrett County residential, business, and agricultural markets.

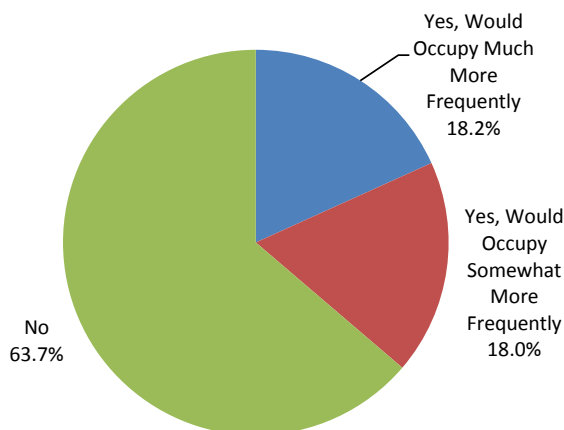
Figure 1: Garrett County Broadband Report—Internet Connection by Dwelling Type



In addition, more than one-third of second home owners said that access to a faster Internet connection would allow them to occupy their second home more frequently (see **Error! Reference source not found.** elow).

Figure 2: Garrett County Broadband Report—Internet in Second Homes

### Would You Occupy Second Home More Frequently If Faster Internet?



Garrett County also has a significant commuter population. According to the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development, about one fifth of residents commute to locations outside the County to work.

County leaders are aware of the importance of broadband development to the economic future of the community. The Broadband Study noted that as access to high-speed networks increases, it is likely to bring with it increases in income and new business investment; and new, high-quality jobs. In that light, this RFP is designed to seek a prospective Partner interested in helping the County bring broadband access to new segments of the community.



We believe that the case for broadband service expansion in Garrett County is compelling for potential providers, because the County's residents and businesses have a demonstrated interest in and demand for broadband use. The surveys conducted in the course of the Broadband Study produced very high response rates, indicating a high level of interest in broadband use. The foundation of a well informed and engaged community, combined with our intent to provide considerable capital support, makes this project a compelling business opportunity for network operators and providers interested in pursuing a largely untapped broadband market in the rural parts of the County.

The Target Areas for this project are currently served by dial-up phone lines, some DSL, and limited mobile broadband. These are not uniformly available to all homes and businesses in the area. In addition, mobile broadband services, where they exist, are limited by data caps (limitations on aggregate total upload and download capacity) that limit those products' value for such key uses as home-based education, home-based business, and other bandwidth-intensive uses of the Internet.

Our analysis of the market in Garrett County and the Target Areas is available for review by bidders in the Broadband Study; the report is available online.<sup>2</sup>

#### **4. Project Background**

The Broadband Study issued several recommendations for the County to reach its broadband goals. One recommendation was to build a network to create last-mile connectivity between existing fiber backbone and residential and business end-users in underserved and unserved parts of the County. An RFI was issued and sought to gauge interest among private companies in helping the County pursue this goal. This RFP is intended to identify a private Partner with whom the County can negotiate a mutually agreed-upon and beneficial partnership.

The broadband study specifically recommended that the County consider a last-mile wireless network using TVWS technology. Garrett County is far enough from major urban centers that a considerable amount of vacant broadcast spectrum is available for broadband use. TVWS uses spectrum that does not require line-of-sight, and it can cover relatively long distances. It can also deliver connectivity at a level higher than many available wireless services; users would get typical download speeds of 3 Mbps and typical upload speeds of 1 Mbps. TVWS has excellent propagation characteristics—including indoors. It is able to penetrate physical obstructions that cannot be penetrated by the spectrum used for traditional WiFi—from exterior building walls to broad-leaf trees and, in a limited way, larger physical obstructions such as hills. Finally, TVWS base station equipment is inexpensive relative to 3G, WiMAX, and LTE technologies typically used in licensed spectrum. TVWS user equipment is still costly relative to other options, but can be expected to fall in cost as it is more widely adopted.

#### **5. Funding Availability**

In 2013 and 2014, the County was awarded ARC funding for the first and second phases of its last-mile wireless network deployment (Phase 1 and Phase 2). The County currently plans that in 2015 it will seek match funding from ARC for a third phase of network deployment (Phase 3).

Once the County's Partner is selected and a mutually-agreeable contract executed, the Phase 1 and Phase 2 funds will be used by the Partner to build a network to serve residential and business end-users in the target

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<sup>2</sup> The Broadband Study was prepared for the Garrett County Office of Economic Development and the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) by CTC Technology & Energy in 2012 and can be found on both the County's website ([www.garrettcountry.org/dotcom/files/GarrettCountyBroadbandReport.pdf](http://www.garrettcountry.org/dotcom/files/GarrettCountyBroadbandReport.pdf)) and CTC's website (<http://www.ctcnet.us/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/GarrettCountyBroadbandReport.pdf>).

areas. The pilot network must be scalable to ultimately accommodate all of the target areas we have identified, providing the potential for service to as many as 3,000 currently unserved and underserved residences and businesses. The County will provide a total of \$400,000 in funding for Phase 1 of the Project, contingent upon the terms of the agreement, which will include performance metrics to ensure the objectives and timeline of the Project are being met.

An additional \$400,000 or more will be available for Phase 2 of the Project, which will be contingent upon performance in Phase 1.

Garrett County intends to seek additional funding for Phase 3 of the project, which will be used for additional customers in the same service area. Funding for Phase 3 has not yet been secured, and cannot be guaranteed.

## **6. Target Network Coverage Areas**

The County identified the Target Areas for which it seeks service as a result of this procurement based on the following data:

- Public surveys conducted during the broadband study
- Input from the County's Economic Development Department
- County knowledge of Mountain Communications, LLC's (Procom) fiber routes
- Service areas reported by the Comcast Corporation and Shenandoah Telecommunications Company (Shentel). (The Comcast, Procom, and Shentel service areas are approximations based on the companies' input and other data; while the data lack the granularity required for a street-level design, they are sufficient for purposes of determining unserved and underserved areas of the County.)<sup>3</sup>

The Target Areas (Sections 1 and 6 on the map in below) were selected by the County from among the six key underserved/unserved areas in the County. Those two areas represent 1,455 potential end user premises according to the County's GIS records. Given the County's approximately 20,100 residences, these areas represent approximately seven percent of the County's residential addresses.

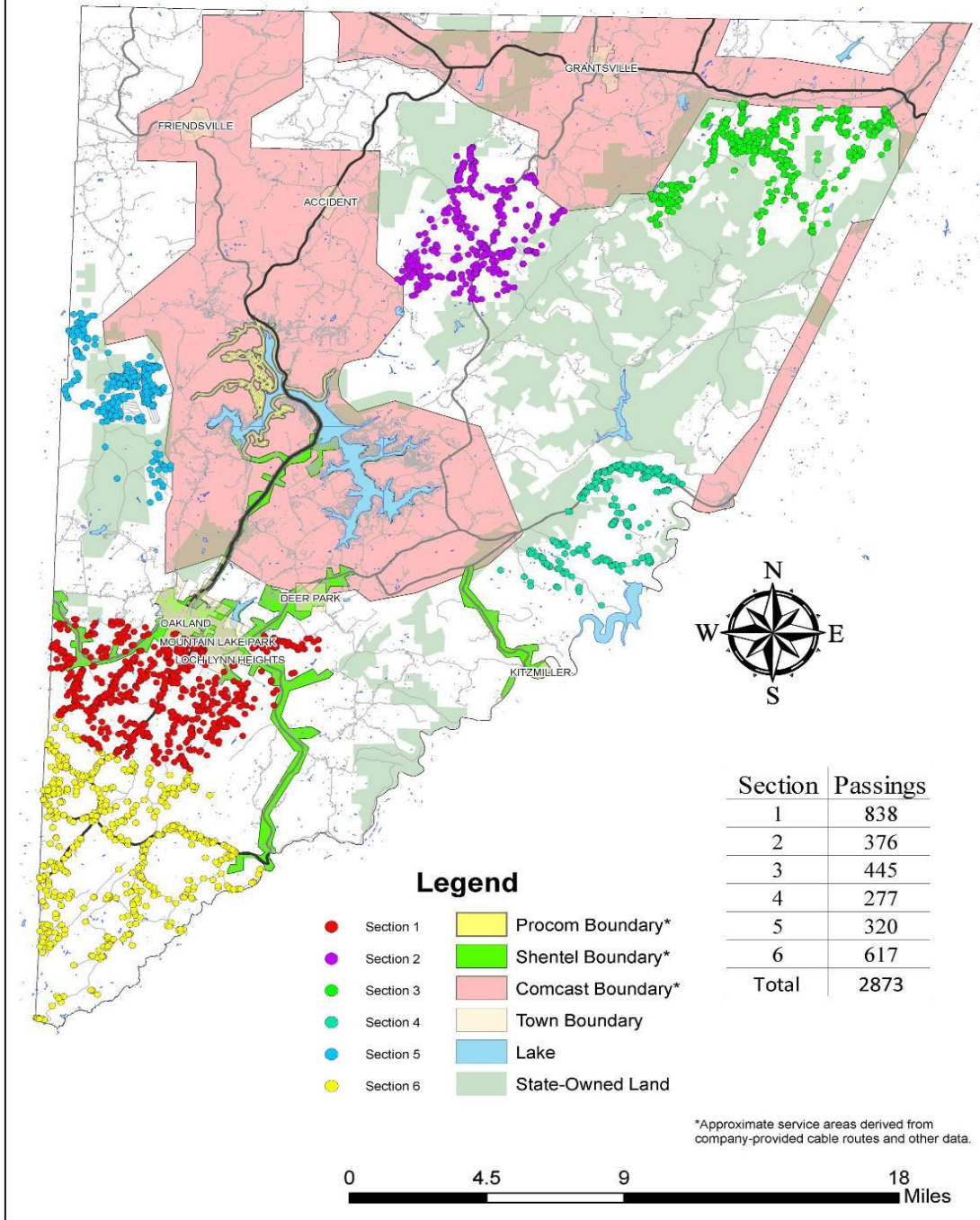
While the County has prioritized Sections 1 and 6 as Target Areas, we welcome and will afford additional weight to Respondents who propose to make available service to additional areas of the County, particularly those in Sections 2 through 5.

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<sup>3</sup> This analysis was completed without the benefit of granular data detailing the availability of DSL, because that information is not publicly available; thus, some of these homes may be eligible for DSL service.

Figure 3: Map of Proposed Network Coverage Areas

# Garrett County Wireless Network Coverage



## **7. Project Requirements**

### **7.1 Service Requirements**

The County has identified key service requirements for the services to be offered by the Partner. Respondents to this RFP should indicate how their proposal will enable the following:

- a) Offer service to customers in the Target Area, ultimately providing the potential for service to all customer premises in the Target Area. Develop a buildout and service strategy for a network serving as many customers as possible in each Phase of the project.
- b) Respond to the needs of businesses and residents in the target coverage areas through excellent service and customer service.
- c) Provide cost-effective services that are reasonably priced given the target market. For the network to have the intended economic and quality of life impacts, we consider both cost and availability of service to be important.
- d) Operate a network that is neutral with respect to applications, websites, type of use, and type of end-user device.
- e) Offer data services that do not limit, quota, cap, or otherwise ration a user's total upload and download data capacity to an extent that limits reasonable use of broadband. We emphasize that data service without draconian aggregate caps is necessary to achieve what the County's goals of enabling residents to benefit from Internet use. To enable the kinds of economically desirable activities we seek—such as home-based business, digital learning, and attracting residents and visitors to spend more time in Garrett County--the service plans offered should encourage more Internet use, rather than using data caps to influence customers to ration their consumption.

### **7.2 Funding, Ownership, and Events of Default**

#### **7.21 Funding**

All County funding in each Phase is to be used for capital expenditures and hard network assets, such as TVWS and customer premises equipment.

Funding for Phase 1 will be available for immediate use by the selected partner and will total \$400,000. Funding for Phase 2 will be contingent upon performance in Phase 1 and will total \$400,000. Funding for Phase 3 has yet to be determined, and – if available – will be contingent upon performance in previous Phases.

The Partner will install, operate, and maintain all necessary last-mile equipment and sell services to interested businesses and residences in the County.

#### **7.2.2 Ownership**

All equipment purchased with County funds will initially belong to the County per the terms of its receipt of grant funding from ARC.

County-owned equipment will be utilized by the Partner under a lease for a five-year performance period. If at the end of this period the Partner has performed satisfactorily, the County and ARC will provide a lease in perpetuity for the Partner.

### 7.2.3 Events of Default

In the event that the Partner fails at any time during the five-year performance period to meet the requirements of this RFP and the obligations of its bid (Obligations), the County may terminate the lease and take immediate possession of all the assets, equipment, and facilities purchased with County funds.

### 7.3 Technical Requirements

In an effort to ensure a successful long-term realization of benefits for County residents and businesses, and to uphold ARC requirements, the County outlines the following technical performance requirements for respondents:

- a) A minimum of eight TVWS base stations to be used to each provide service over 6 MHz of upstream and 6 MHz of downstream (total of one 6 MHz channel) capacity over the initial service area, or the equivalent capacity using an alternative technology.
- b) Network will be able to manage Quality of Service to individual users, either by use of network routers or through the wireless network management system.
- c) Network management should include the capability to split users into multiple tiers of service, each with different maximum speeds.
- d) Received Signal Strength >-90 dBm to more than 75 percent of the homes and businesses in coverage area.
- e) Capability of providing >5 Mbps download throughput and >2 Mbps Upload throughput to more than 75 percent of homes and businesses in coverage area.
- f) Latency <100 microseconds to more than 75 percent of the homes and businesses in coverage area, enabling use of VoIP services.
- g) Backup power at each base station and NOC location of at least 24 hours in case of electric outage.
- h) RF design for 99.9 percent uptime.
- i) Base station should have capability to provide >15 Mbps to single user.

### 7.4 Local Presence Requirement

We believe that it is imperative that the selected Partner have a strong local presence in order to successfully construct, implement, operate, and maintain a network. We do not require that respondents be local at the time of response to this RFP, but respondents must describe their plans for establishing a local presence if they do not already have one.

It is our expectation that qualified respondents will maintain a local retail office where customers may be able to seek information about service, obtain or cancel service, obtain or exchange equipment, and pay or discuss their service invoices. The local office may serve other purposes as well, and the County does not provide this as an exhaustive list, but instead as a framework for services that we anticipate being locally available to customers.



Maintaining a local presence is important to quality customer service, and is critical for maintaining the network. Qualified respondents should have staff stationed within Garrett County who can be quickly responsive to network outages and other issues. Respondents should demonstrate their ability to react promptly to service disruptions at all levels by describing their local presence, including but not limited to: number and function of local staff members, number and function of local vehicles and diagnostic equipment that will be dedicated to Garrett County, and ultimately the expected location of all local offices.

## **8. Proposal Requirements**

The County requests the following information—in as much detail as is practicable—from respondents:

### **8.1 Commitment**

Please affirm that you are interested in this partnership and will meet the requirements and obligations contained in this RFP if selected as the County's Partner.

### **8.2 Exceptions**

If you cannot meet any of the requirements of this RFP, please indicate the requirements to which you take exception and provide a detailed explanation of the exceptions.

### **8.3 Partner Technical Viability and Experience**

The County seeks a Partner with the technical capacity and experience to meet the needs described in this RFP. This section is intended to explain how your firm is a suitable partner for this project. Please provide a statement of experience discussing past performance, capabilities, and qualifications. Among other things, please address the following:

1. Identify other networks your firm (or the management team you propose here) has operated, as well as any network design and build experience; include the levels of broadband speed, technology type, availability and adoption among different categories of end-users and unique capabilities or attributes.
2. Discuss partnerships with other service providers, government, or non-profit entities you have undertaken, particularly any involving wireless networking and/or providing service to rural or underserved populations. Describe the nature of the projects and your firm's role.
3. Discuss your capabilities with regard to engineering and design of wireless systems. While the County will not mandate use of TVWS as the sole technology in this last-mile wireless network, we require that qualified respondents demonstrate an ability to engineer and design a wireless last-mile system capable of supporting the County's objectives and describe past experience. In addition, because delivery of residential broadband services differs significantly from delivery of commercial services, please illustrate your ability and describe your past experience engineering and designing a system capable of serving and supporting residential customers identified by the County as underserved or unserved.
4. Discuss your capabilities regarding operation and maintenance of wireless systems. Overall operation, including routine and emergency maintenance, of the last-mile system is crucial to its success. Please demonstrate through past experience your ability to operate and maintain all aspects of the core last-mile network.
5. Provide example(s) of existing CRM system(s) that demonstrate your ability to deliver quality customer service.
6. Provide an example of a web customer interface you have provided in a residential ISP deployment.

#### **8.4 Partner Management Team Viability and Experience**

The County seeks a Partner that will assign an experienced and able management team to design, build, operate, and maintain the proposed Garrett County network. Please identify the team members you propose for this project and describe their experience and capabilities. Please include resumes.

#### **8.5 Partner Financial Viability and Experience**

The County seeks a Partner with the financial capacity to meet the needs described in this RFP. Please provide and explanation and data to demonstrate to the County your financial capacity and capability to undertake this project. Among other documents, you may provide audited financial statements, bank statements, or SEC filings. In addition, should you commit to obtaining a Commercial Contract Surety Bond, you will receive the maximum credit under the Financial Viability criterion for scoring of the bids to this RFP.

#### **8.6 Technical Proposal**

As described above, the County does not intend to dictate to the Partner what network to build or how to build it. Rather, the County has established key functional requirements for the network and seeks proposals that detail plans to meet those functional requirements.

In this section of your proposal, please tell the County how you will meet the technical requirements described above using the funds allocated by the County. Among other questions, you should address the following:

1. Describe your approach to developing service for the three phases of the network described above. Specify to how many locations you will provide network service in each Phase.
2. Describe the technologies and vendors you plan to use. Provide a network diagram with key links, key components, and their location. Describe what protocols will be used and capacities of each link. Provide make and model of base station and customer premises equipment. Describe a typical customer installation, including antenna mounting and interface with customer equipment.
3. Describe the approach you will use to interconnect with the Internet and other public networks. Explain how you will manage the interconnections between the County network and other networks in the area.
4. Describe how you will perform installation and network management. Describe at what sort of facility (or facilities) you would place network electronics.
5. Describe your technological roadmap for providing increases in performance.
6. Describe your plan to perform network maintenance on an ongoing and as-needed basis.
7. Provide a detailed bill of materials (BOM) of the equipment you propose to purchase and facilities you propose to install with County funds during each Phase of the project.

#### **8.7 Service and Pricing Proposal**

As in regard to technical matters, the County does not intend to dictate to the Partner what services to provide or at what price. Rather, the County has established the key goals for services described above and seeks proposals that detail plans to meet those goals.

1. Describe the service options you plan to offer over this network. Define what download/upload or symmetrical speeds you will offer. Describe how your residential and business offerings will differ, if at all.
2. Describe your plan to provide cost-effective services that are reasonably priced given the target market.
3. Discuss whether your services will be neutral with respect to applications, websites, type of use, and type of end-user device.
4. Discuss whether and to what degree your service plans will limit, quota, cap, or otherwise ration a user's total upload and download data capacity.
5. Discuss your plan to provide exceptional customer service.

### 8.8 Timeline

What is your proposed schedule for design, construction, and initiation of service in each Phase? Please offer a timeline with key milestones.

### 8.9 Plan for Local Presence and Benefit

Please discuss your plans to establish (or maintain existing) local presence. Describe any aspect of your plan that will involve hiring local contractors and providers in Garrett County or will involve employing people in the County.

### 8.10 References

Please provide three references for your company and three references for each key member of the management team you propose for this project, including contact information, from previous contracts or partnerships.

## 9. Criteria for Selection

The County will evaluate all responses to this RFP based upon the following criteria, weighted as follows:

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Evaluation weight</i>
Number of County residences for whom service will be available, and minimum number of County residences the Respondent commits to connect	25 percent
Business/service proposal meets County requirements	13 percent
Technical proposal meets County requirements	13 percent
Financial viability of respondent	15 percent (commitment to obtain performance bid will result in maximum credit under this criterion)
Aggregate bandwidth cap plan impact on consumer use of broadband service	10 percent
Technical capabilities and past performance of respondent	10 percent



Management team capabilities and past performance	10 percent
Local presence	4 percent

## 10. Payment Milestones

Garrett County intends to award funding as follows:

- Partner will receive Phase 1 funds at time of contract execution
- Partner will receive Phase 2 funds upon demonstration satisfactory to the County of the following:
  - Drive test data verifying Partner has met technical requirements for Phase 1
  - Documentation demonstrating Partner has met agreed target for number of connected customers in Phase 1
  - Documentation demonstrating Partner has met agreed customer service goals for customers in Phase 1
- If Phase 3 funds are made available, Partner will receive Phase 3 funds upon demonstration satisfactory to the County of the following:
  - Drive test data verifying Partner has met technical requirements for Phases 1 and 2
  - Documentation demonstrating Partner has met agreed target for number of connected customers in Phases 1 and 2
  - Documentation demonstrating Partner has met agreed customer service goals for customers in Phases 1 and 2

## 11. Backhaul Opportunities

The County recommends that potential respondents investigate the potential to secure backhaul services from the Maryland Broadband Cooperative, which has extensive fiber optic backbone in Garrett County that traverses the County on major highways. The MdBC's existing fiber route runs along I-68 west from Allegany County to Friendsville, then turns north onto MD-42 to the Pennsylvania state line. MdBC also has high fiber count south along US-219 (from the I-68 interchange) to Oakland, the County seat, and along a number of smaller routes including MD-29 and MD-135. The MdBC also operates two POPs in Garrett County.

The County also recommends that potential respondents investigate other backhaul options. Shentel, Lumos Networks, and Comcast are among the private entities that may be sources of backhaul for the Partner.

## 12. RFP Timeline and Deadlines

All interested respondents are asked to submit a Letter of Intent to the Garrett County Purchasing Department on or before Friday, December 19, 2014 at 2:00 P.M. (local time). Final RFP submissions must be received by on or before 2:00 PM, January 13, 2015.

The following is the schedule for responding to this RFP. The schedule is subject to change:

RFP Released – December 4, 2014

Letter of Intent Deadline – December 19, 2014 by 2:00 P.M. (local time)

Question Deadline – December 29, 2014 by 2:00 P.M. (local time)

RFP Due – on or before 2:00 P.M., January 13, 2015 (local time)

Garrett County thanks you in advance for your response.

**Request for Proposals  
Private Partner for Construction, Deployment  
Operation and Maintenance of  
County Broadband Internet Network  
RFP #15-0113B**

**Signature Sheet**

My signature certifies that the proposal as submitted complies with all Terms and Conditions set forth in this RFI.

My signature also certifies that the accompanying proposal is not the result of, or affected by, any unlawful act of collusion with another person or company engaged in the same line of business or commerce.

My signature also certifies that this Firm has no business or personal relationships with any other companies or persons that could be considered as a conflict of interest to the County, and that there are no principals, officers, agents, employees, or representatives of this Firm that have any business or personal relationships with any other companies or persons that could be considered as a conflict of interest or a potential conflict of interest to the County, pertaining to any and all work or services to be performed as a result of this request and any resulting contract with the County.

I hereby certify that I am authorized to sign as a Representative for the Firm:

Name of Firm or Individual: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Fed ID No. \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

To receive consideration for award, this signature sheet must be returned to the Garrett County Purchasing Department as it shall be a part of your response. Firm acknowledges receipt of Addendum(s), if any, by initialing the following:

Addendum #1 \_\_\_\_\_  
Addendum #2 \_\_\_\_\_

Addendum #3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Addendum #4 \_\_\_\_\_