



## Research Valley Technology Council

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### RESEARCH VALLEY PARTNERSHIP REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON DEVELOPMENT OF NEXT GENERATION BROADBAND NETWORK

**ALL RESPONSES REQUESTED TO BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN 12:00 P.M. CENTRAL TIME ON NOVEMBER 15, 2013.**

#### I. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The Research Valley Partnership (“RVP”), a public-private economic development corporation, is issuing this Request for Information (“RFI”) on behalf of the Research Valley Technology Council (“RVTC”) and the cities of Bryan and College Station, Texas; Brazos County, Texas; Texas A&M University; and Brazos Valley Council of Governments (collectively the “Research Valley Communities”). RVP is a partnership of city, county, university and private sector leaders that are helping businesses grow, expand and locate in the Research Valley through planning and value-added services and support. The greater region of Bryan-College Station has an innovation-driven business climate in full-blown economic expansion, with massive sources of ‘big data’ generation. Supporting a top tier R&D setting, the region, referred to as The Research Valley, provides the best vantage point in the center of the Texas Triangle for networking with the Houston, Dallas-Fort Worth, and San Antonio marketplaces. As a result of this partnership approach to regional economic development, RVP is able to quickly implement consortia initiatives and ensure that the community’s shared priorities are met effectively.



The RFI solicits interest and information from potential providers of a next-generation, ultra-high-speed fiber-optic broadband communications network (Network) that will meet the current and future needs of businesses, institutions, government entities, and residents throughout the Bryan-College Station metropolitan area.

This RFI is open to, and welcomes, responses from all legally qualified entities, including incumbent communications service providers.

**A. Background, Goals and Objectives**

Across America, fiber-optic broadband networks are becoming drivers and enablers of robust economic development and global competitiveness, fostering advanced educational opportunities and access to more affordable modern healthcare. They simultaneously support sophisticated new manufacturing technologies, intelligent transportation systems, smart electric grids, and much more. The Research Valley Communities believe that acquiring such a network is critical to their continuing rapid growth and prosperity as one of the world's leading research and technology hubs and as one of America's best places to live. The RFI seeks information that will help the Research Valley Communities achieve the following goals and objectives:

- Attract a fiber optic broadband network that will stimulate the Research Valley's economic growth and global competitiveness, drive job creation, foster innovation, enhance healthcare delivery, improve education, and serve multiple new areas of development in the community;
- Make broadband connectivity at symmetrical speeds of at least 1 Gigabit per second (Gbps) available to residents on an affordable and timely basis throughout the Research Valley;
- Make broadband connectivity at symmetrical speeds of at least 10-100 Gbps available to businesses and institutions on an affordable and timely basis throughout the Research Valley;
- Introduce competitive choice to ensure that businesses, institutions, and residents have access to the services of their choice from the service providers of their choice;
- Lay the foundation for future upgrades and for expansion of the network to other areas of the region;
- Establish wireless network canopies in parks and public spaces in areas adjacent to portions of the wired network.

To achieve these goals and objectives, the Research Valley Communities are willing to offer Network provider(s) various significant cost-saving and revenue-enhancing incentives, including:

- Streamlined regulatory and permitting practices;
- Tax, enterprise zone, and other financial incentives;
- Coordination with planned construction activities;

- Access to available infrastructure and other public assets -- including publicly-owned poles, ducts, conduits, towers, buildings, dark fiber, etc. -- on attractive terms and conditions.<sup>1</sup>
- To the extent permitted by applicable law, support in promotion of the Network's value as an engine of economic development and other benefits to the Research Valley Communities.

The Research Valley Communities expect the Network provider to provide all funds for the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of the Network.

### **B. Coordination among the Research Valley Communities**

Each of the Research Valley Communities must ultimately reach its own agreements with the Network provider for usage of infrastructure, access to public rights of way, and other matters directly affecting that community. At the same time, the communities recognize the value of coordination and common approaches to the greatest extent possible. As a result, the RVP will act as a clearinghouse to facilitate and coordinate activities under the RFI, and each community will designate a single point of contact for prospective Network providers. An example of the desire and ability of the Research Valley Communities to work together to achieve common goals is their interlocal agreement for the development of the One Health Plus Biocorridor (more on this below), which may facilitate the development of uniform zoning and construction requirements.

### **C. About the Bryan-College Station Research Valley Metro Area**

The Research Valley is fast becoming the innovation capital of Texas. The Valley is located in the center of the Texas Triangle bounded by Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston and San Antonio. It is anchored by the cities of Bryan and College Station, Brazos County, and Texas A&M University. The Bryan-College Station area is widely recognized as one of the top U.S. metropolitan areas for doing business. Among other things, it is:

- Ranked No. 3 on Kiplinger's Personal Finance's Top 10 list of great places to live under a population of one million (reflecting jobs, affordable homes, schools, health care and plenty to do indoors and out).
- Ranked No. 4 by Milken Institute as best performing small metro in U.S.
- Ranked No 4 as best place to retire by USA Today and for military retirement by USAA.

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise agreed, any such infrastructure and other assets would remain the property of the respective Communities.

- Ranked No. 5 on Forbes' Top 10 list of best small places for business and careers, including No. 6 as best small cities for job growth.
- The Bryan-College Station metro area is also recognized as a Top 10 best college town in America by Livability.com

Both Bryan and College Station own and operate their own electric and water utilities and therefore control a substantial majority of the poles and conduits within the Bryan-College Station metro area. As has been recognized time and again, ownership of a municipal utility has often been a key contributor to the success of public-private community broadband initiatives.

#### **D. Research Valley by the Numbers**

	<b>Population 2013</b>	<b>Population 2018</b>
Bryan	78,232	81,376
College Station	96,818	106,357
Brazos County Bryan-College Station Metro CBSA	235,135	251,836
60 Mile Radius	983,423	1,083,638
Temple-Waco-Bryan DMA	1,002,762	1,062,889

	<b>Housing Units 2013</b>	<b>Housing Units 2018</b>
Bryan	31,583 housing units of which 10,451 are apartments	33,610 housing units of which 11,372 will be apartments
College Station	38,614 housing units of which 18,915 are apartments	42,937 housing units of which 20,465 will be apartments
Bryan-College Station Metro CBSA	97,940 housing units of which 31,358 are apartments	106,334 housing units of which 34,034 will be apartments
60 Mile Radius	390,650 housing units of which 63,240 are apartments	432,887 housing units of which 69,295 will be apartments
Waco-Temple-Bryan DMA	412,135 housing units of which 96,709 are apartments	442,022 housing units of which 104,077 will be apartments

<b>2013 Median Household Income</b>	
Bryan	\$37,486
College Station	\$31,644
Brazos County	\$37,405

**Education Attained for Metro Area (2013)**

High School	31,936
Some College	23,330
Associate's Degree	7,358
Bachelor's Degree	20,427
Graduate Degree	18,486

**August 2013 Bryan-College Station MSA Economy Mix**

Mining, Logging and Construction	7%
Manufacturing	6%
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	15%
Information	1%
Financial Activities	4%
Professional and Business Services	7%
Education and Health Services	11%
Leisure and Hospitality	13%
Other Services	4%
Government	32%

**Unemployment Rate (August 2013)**

Bryan	5.3%
College Station	5.6%
Brazos County	5.4%

**Colleges/Universities**

Texas A&M University	<p>12 Colleges with Bryan-College Station also home to The Texas A&amp;M University System, that includes 7 state agencies and 2 service units</p> <p>~ 43,000 Undergraduate students</p> <p>~ 11,000 Graduate students</p>
Blinn College	<p>Two-year college focused on workforce development</p> <p>18,000 students</p>

**Electric Service**

Bryan	Bryan Texas Utilities <a href="http://www.btutilities.com/">http://www.btutilities.com/</a> 32,913 electric meters  Aerial 70% (90% owned by BTU)  Underground 30% (100% owned by BTU)
College Station	College Station Utilities <a href="http://www.cstx.gov/index.aspx?page=501">http://www.cstx.gov/index.aspx?page=501</a> 37,832 electric meters  Aerial 46% (100% owned by College Station)  Underground 54% (100% owned by College Station)
Brazos County	Bryan Texas Utilities 16,925 electric meters  Primarily aerial.

**Cable Television**

Bryan	Suddenlink
College Station	Suddenlink
Brazos County	Suddenlink

**Wireline Local Telephone**

Bryan	Verizon, Suddenlink (VoIP)
College Station	Verizon, Suddenlink (VoIP)
Brazos County	Verizon, Suddenlink (VoIP)

**Current Wireline Broadband Providers**

Bryan	Verizon (DSL), Suddenlink (cable/fiber), and WireStar (fiber/DSL)
College Station	Verizon (DSL), Suddenlink (cable/fiber), and WireStar (fiber/DSL)
Brazos County	Verizon (DSL) and Suddenlink (cable/fiber)

**Current Wireless Broadband Providers**

Bryan	SkyBeam, Texas Broadband, and Texas Communications
College Station	SkyBeam, Texas Broadband, and Texas Communications
Brazos County	SkyBeam, Texas Broadband, Texas Communications, and Brazos WiFi

## **E. The Research Valley Partnership**

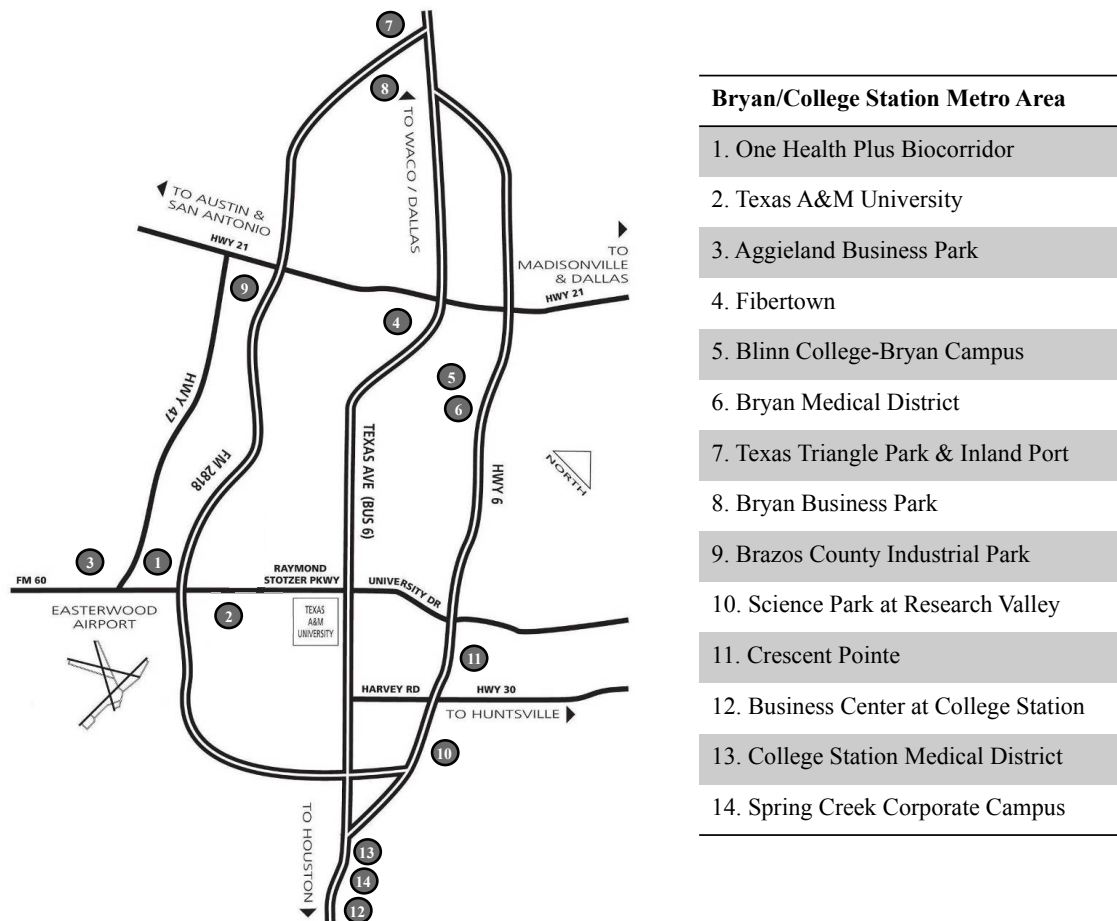
The Research Valley Partnership, a public-private economic development corporation, serves as the catalyst of economic development in the Research Valley region, connecting community, university, and industry, and builds upon the foundation of the Texas A&M's global expertise in engineering, agriculture, animal health, energy, and the biosciences. To maximize opportunities from globalization and technological change, the Research Valley practices a community growth approach called "innovation economic development." It is a process of embracing a global innovation economy that encourages a wellspring of ideas, builds infrastructure to promote a culture of entrepreneurship, and supports the transfer of ideas into the global marketplace. RVP facilitates investing within the region to create a 21st Century Community that is globally competitive and attracts top talent and companies.

The Research Valley's innovative economic development philosophy is at the heart of this broadband initiative. The RVP and the RVTC, and the clusters of communities, businesses, and institutions that comprise them, recognize that access to improvements in communications and a state-of-the-art, ultra-high-speed broadband network is essential to virtually everything that the Valley's growing knowledge-based economy is planning to do, in economic development, healthcare, energy management, and education. Through a collaborative process, the Research Valley Communities are proactively taking steps to ensure themselves that they have such regional economic resources powered by an ultra-high speed broadband platform.

Not only does the Bryan-College Station metro area have a vibrant economy, rising living standards, and a highly capable knowledge workforce, but it also the site of several unique bandwidth-hungry initiatives that are poised for rapid expansion. These initiatives provide a forward-looking broadband Network provider the opportunity to benefit from explosive growth, by serving both high-tech companies and upscale residential consumers.

Figure 1 on the following page shows public and private real estate locations in the Bryan-College Station metro area that provide businesses speed-to-market connectivity and resources to expand their opportunities. To reflect the area's livability, attractiveness, and strong ties between businesses and the community's educated workforce, there are also numerous residential real estate developments, from loft apartments to sprawling executive homes, in proximity to these business locations.

Figure 1 – Featured Public &amp; Private Real Estate for Businesses



## F. One Health Plus Biocorridor

The Research Valley's new One Health Plus Biocorridor is positioned to become the epicenter of Texas' emerging biotech industry cluster and is a prime example of the RVP's innovative approach to economic development and of the collaborative efforts among various community stakeholders. The 3,500-acre Biocorridor will be a global destination that facilitates collaboration among scientists, clinicians, students, government, commercial partners, and community residents. It was formed through an interlocal cooperation and joint development agreement among the cities of Bryan and College Station and Texas A&M. Anchored by the new 200-acre campus of the Texas A&M University Health Science Center and the Texas A&M Center for Innovation in Advanced Development and Manufacturing (CIADM) – one of three federal centers to provide the nation public health and biosecurity capabilities -- the Biocorridor also includes a rapidly-expanding cluster of private-sector facilities that currently include GlaxoSmithKline, Kalon Biotherapeutics, Caliber Biotherapeutics, G-Con, and Woodbolt International. As a result, the Biocorridor is collaborative and networked across public and private institutions, education and business, and large and small firms. It is rapidly becoming the nation's premier destination for bio-research, development of therapies, pre-clinical evaluations,



and manufacturing of drugs and other substances in one convenient location. All of these and other incoming entities will require massive amounts of robust broadband.

Moreover, the Biocorridor also includes a mixed-use development of 370-acres of new residential housing and a town center built around a 1,000-acre championship golf community designed by Jack Nicklaus.

#### **G. Texas A&M University**

The best ‘college towns’ appeal not just to potential students, but also to potential residents and businesses looking for strong economies and opportunities to grow. Headquartered in College Station, The Texas A&M University System strives for the highest quality undergraduate, graduate, and professional educational programs; outreach and community enhancement services that meet the needs of individuals and organizations; and research and knowledge generation that meets our creative needs and supports the foundation for economic development in Texas.

The Texas A&M System is one of the largest systems of higher education in the nation, with a statewide network of 11 universities, seven state agencies, two service units and a comprehensive health science center. System members educate more than 125,000 students and reach another 22 million people through service each year. With more than 28,000 faculty and staff, the Texas A&M System has a physical presence in 250 of the state’s 254 counties and a programmatic presence in every one. In 2011, externally funded research expenditures exceeded \$780 million to help drive the State’s economy.

Texas A&M University is one of a select few academic institutions in the nation to hold triple federal designations as a land-grant, sea-grant, and space-grant university. The University consistently ranks at the top of all universities in the nation for graduates that recruiters from corporations, nonprofits and government agencies prefer to hire. Texas A&M University is dedicated to the discovery, development, communication, and application of knowledge in a wide range of academic and professional fields. Its College of Engineering, for example, launched an unprecedented “25 by 25” initiative in the Fall of 2013 to increase engineering enrollment from approximately 11,000 current students to 25,000 students by 2025. In response to the critical need to increase the engineering workforce of the state and the nation, such a systemic enrollment increase will necessarily increase at all levels the number of students and faculty who live/work off campus and will have a need and expectation of robust broadband connectivity throughout the Region.

#### **H. Aggieland Business Park**

Located adjacent to the One Health Plus Biocorridor, the 120-acre Aggieland Business Park offers flexible build-to-suit options to attract high-tech public and private institutions, R&D education and businesses, and large and small firms that desire a site between 1-3 miles from the economic engines of Texas A&M University Health Science Center, CIADM, Easterwood Airport and Texas A&M University.

**I. Fibertown, Blinn College-Bryan Campus, and Bryan Medical District**

Located in historic downtown Bryan, and approximately 100 miles northwest of Houston and 150 miles from the Texas Gulf Coast, FIBERTOWN BRYAN is Tier IV-designed data center that serves Fortune 500 and mid-size organizations. Fibertown delivers fault-tolerant protection and enterprise-grade blended connectivity for mission-critical infrastructure. Located next to a fiber interexchange, and providing a dedicated, private gateway connecting FIBERTOWN BRYAN and FIBERTOWN HOUSTON data centers, the Brazos Community Emergency Operations Center also houses operations in the facility. Onsite guest office and conference space is available at the Bryan data center. In close proximity to FIBERTOWN BRYAN are Blinn College's densely populated 80-acre Bryan Campus and the adjacent medical complex of the St. Joseph Regional Health Center, which anchors a City planned medical district to complement existing healthcare facilities and support the hospital's growth and area's related uses.

**J. Texas Triangle Park & Inland Port**

Located in north Brazos County, the Texas Triangle Park & Inland Port is a 1,100-acre master planned industrial park with access to an unparalleled transportation network, including a Foreign Trade Zone. Designed to accommodate the needs of energy, advanced manufacturing and logistics companies, the Park is centered at the hub of the Texas Triangle that is Houston, Dallas-Fort Worth, and San Antonio. The Texas Triangle Park features speed-to-market connectivity to the Port of Houston to serve as an international import and export gateway to North America's southwest region. Multinational businesses within the Park such as Gunler Foods and Axis Pipe and Tube can easily reach a workforce population of over 6.7 million within a 90-mile radius.

**K. Bryan Business Park and Brazos County Industrial Park**

Located in northwest Bryan across from the Texas Triangle Park & Inland Port, the first 200+ acres of the rail capacity Bryan Business Park are occupied by businesses including Toyo Ink, New Southwest Baking Co., Coca-Cola, and Sanderson Farms. The Park has an adjacent 200-acres ready for development. The Brazos County Industrial Park, located in west Bryan is the area's first industrial park (established as a joint city-county venture in 1969). The resident businesses in this 300+ acre park include Kent Moore Cabinets, Pepsi-Cola, ConocoPhillips, Saint-Gobain NorPro, and Transit Mix.

**L. Science Park at Research Valley and Crescent Pointe**

Located in east College Station along Texas State Highway 6, the Science Park at Research Valley is a 53-acre master planned site supporting public and private enterprises in their scientific innovation, R&D breakthroughs and technology transfer. Flexibly designed to support entrepreneurs at every stage of business, the Park's main 180,000 square foot facility is anchored by the corporate headquarters of Lynntech and also features Class A space for analytical laboratories, advanced machining, prototype creation, and commercial production. Also located in east College Station is Crescent Pointe, a 192-acre master planned, mixed-use development with frontage on University Drive (State Highway 60) and Harvey Rd (State Highway 30).

**M. Business Center at College Station and College Station Medical District**

Located in southeast College Station, the Business Center at College Station is a 200-acre, Class A corporate campus with a fully developed infrastructure, fiber optic connectivity, park landscaping, and zoning for further technology and office development. Current residents include firms involved in telecommunications, software development and technology manufacturing. Located in the south College Station, the College Station Medical District is a 1,700-acres mixed-use zone to accommodate medical facilities, walkable village centers, commercial space, and a variety of residential unit types. The District includes an extensive linked network of trails and open spaces to further the overarching concept of a healthy community focused on wellness and is anchored by College Station Medical Center, Baylor Scott & White Health Hospital, St. Joseph College Station Emergency Medical Center, and Strategic Behavioral Health.

**N. Spring Creek Corporate Campus**

Located in southeast College Station, Spring Creek Corporate Campus is a state-of-the-art 300-acre advanced research, technology, and manufacturing site. Featuring a customized, flexible-by-design site configuration, Spring Creek offers State Highway 6 access with multiple gateway entrances for connections to Houston, Dallas, and Austin. Development of the corporate campus is completely insulated by green spaces including park-like amenities and a dominant “nature preserve” setting to enhance the area’s quality of life focus. Additionally, Spring Creek Corporate Campus is centrally located between a variety of multi-use developments including residential, medical and retail.

**O. Other Commercial & Residential Opportunities**

Apart from these specific examples of broadband-hungry target areas, the Research Valley as a whole is poised for expansive growth.

The Texas A&M University Systems' off-campus impact shapes the Bryan-College Station community’s character and incentivizes people to remain for a lifetime. Most residents in the metropolitan area can attribute their jobs, entertainment options, and quality of life in some form or fashion to Texas A&M, which has become a preeminent place for research. In some respects, the community is almost more college than town. Locals refer to the surrounding region as “Aggieland,” due to the loyal support residents show Texas A&M. Over the last few years, several developments have contributed to the attractiveness of the region and helped to spur a boom in area commercial, residential, and hotel construction growth, stimulating the local economy through a multiplier effect that will greatly accelerate job creation. Among these developments are Texas A&M’s entry into the NCAA Southeastern Conference and especially the selection of the One Health Plus Biocorridor to serve as the site for the national Center for Innovation in Advanced Development and Manufacturing. As indicated, the Center will perform research and advanced development to accelerate vaccines and other medical products through pre-clinical and clinical development and to produce these products in cases of pandemics or other national emergencies.

The Bryan-College Station area's desirability for young families and retirees is also increasing, because of the availability of attractive jobs, amenities, and other benefits, and a growing number of national media articles have designated the community as an affordable place to live.

As can be seen, the Research Valley is experiencing dramatic growth and technological advancement that will require a commensurate increase in access to ultrafast broadband capabilities. As such, the Research Valley represents a unique and limited window of opportunity for a forward thinking broadband provider to accelerate deployment of all-fiber access networks in the Bryan-College Station metropolitan area, thereby creating value for service providers and their customers as well as enhancing the area's quality of life and economic development.

## **II. AVAILABLE INFRASTRUCTURE, FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

As indicated, the Research Valley Communities are willing to make certain infrastructure, facilities, and services available to a provider of the fiber-optic broadband Network that they seek. These inducements are described briefly in this section and in greater detail in the attached Schedule of Assets. To the extent required by law, the Research Valley Communities will make these assets available on a non-discriminatory basis. In doing so, the Research Valley Communities will take into account the unique benefits that the provider of a fiber-optic broadband Network will bring to the Communities.

The terms and conditions on which the infrastructure, facilities, and services would be made available would be subject to negotiation between the parties. In certain cases, access to these assets may require consent of third parties. In such situations, the Communities would work with a provider to attempt to obtain any necessary approvals.

### **A. Fiber**

Where available, and to the extent consistent with applicable law, one or more of the Communities may be willing to make optical fibers available to a Network provider pursuant to leases or indefeasible right of use (IRU) agreements. The Network provider would be responsible for activating/lighting the fiber for use. The Communities may also consider contracting with a provider to jointly construct new fiber in areas where a need/demand exists for both the provider and the Community. The details regarding the availability and location of any such fiber will be made available to parties that enter into non-disclosure agreements with the Communities.

### **B. Conduit/Innerduct**

Where available, and to the extent consistent with applicable law, the Communities may be willing to make existing conduit or innerduct available to a Network provider. Additional information on the anticipated process for securing access to conduit/innerduct can be found in the attached Schedule of Assets.

**C. Pole Attachments**

Consistent with applicable law, the Communities will offer a Network provider access to their existing utility poles. While state law requires the Communities to charge non-discriminatory rates for pole attachments, the Communities are willing to consider in-kind compensation that reflects the value of benefits that a Network provider brings to the Communities. Both Bryan and College Station provide municipal electric service and thus own or control 90% and 100%, respectively, of the poles in their service areas. As a result, they also have substantial control over terms and conditions of access and make-ready and will consider processes that make pole attachments as simple, fast, and easy as possible, consistent with safety and the efficient exercise of their responsibilities as electric utilities.

**D. Public Rights-of-Way**

The right to construct and install equipment in public rights-of-way and easements will be subject to the applicable requirements and ordinances of the individual Communities, including rights-of-way use agreements, permits, or franchises, as applicable. The Communities have attempted to streamline and harmonize these processes, consistent with applicable law. The RFI also seeks information on additional ways in which these processes can be streamlined so as to facilitate broadband development while maintaining the safety and integrity of the public rights-of-way.

Access will be provided in accordance with the applicable requirements or ordinances identified in the associated Schedule of Assets. As a general matter, the Communities contemplate that a Network provider will acquire permission to occupy rights of way in one of three ways; by obtaining a Texas State-Wide Cable Franchise Certificate from the Texas Public Utilities Commission, by becoming a State-certificated competitive local telephone carrier, or by obtaining a master rights-of-way permit/use agreement from the Community. A provider possessing any of the above authorizations will have a general right of access to the public rights of way, subject to reasonable construction and excavation permitting requirements. Providers will have access to the public rights of way during regular business hours for non-emergency work and 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in the event of an emergency.

The Communities are willing to commit to a process of assisting all would-be providers in obtaining approvals on a timely basis to allow such work in the public rights of way.

If requested, and to the extent consistent with applicable law, the Communities will also cooperate with a Network provider to facilitate its efforts to gain access to rights of way or easements owned or controlled by third parties within the service area, such as the Texas Department of Transportation.

The Communities will attempt to coordinate planned street maintenance and excavation projects within the public rights of way so as to allow for joint construction and cost sharing to the extent permissible under applicable law.

As a general matter, the Communities estimate that it takes approximately 20 days under ordinary circumstances to complete all steps from application to approval of a permit, and they are willing to explore options to expedite that process.

**E. Wireless Facility Siting**

The Communities, businesses and institutions of the Research Valley are willing to explore the potential for leasing towers, rooftops, and other aerial space for WiMax, LTE and Microwave wireless transmission attachments.

**F. Co-Location**

Where available, and to the extent consistent with applicable law, the Communities are willing to consider providing access to segregated, secured spaces for network equipment within facilities that they own or control or on property adjacent to such facilities. This space may exist at substations, tower sites, fire stations, municipal buildings, or other locations.

**G. Public Notices and Demand Aggregation**

To the extent consistent with applicable law, RVP, RVTC, and the Communities are willing to help a Network provider aggregate demand for its services. This may include publicizing the value of the Network, furnishing the Network provider publicly-available information as to entities in the Research Valley that are likely candidates to enter into contracts for broadband services, and other activities that the Network provider may suggest.

While the RFI is not a request for proposals to provide the Communities communications services, the Communities are willing to entertain suggestions of ways that a Network provider can improve the quality and lower the cost of the communications services that they use in their own operations (e.g., bandwidth, Internet access, voice, video, security monitoring, cloud computing and storage).

In addition, through an interlocal cooperative agreement, all of the participating governmental members of the RVTC currently participate in the ownership and management of a community fiber network known as BVCNet. BVCNet provides broadband transport for government agencies, educational facilities, and community anchor institutions. Given the structure of BVCNet and applicable Texas law, the present RFI does not focus on utilizing the assets of the BVCNet in the development of a broadband network. The RVTC members are, however, willing to explore ways in which a new broadband network could supplement and be integrated with aspects of BVCNet.

**H. Other Assets, Facilities, Services**

To the extent available, and consistent with applicable law, the members of the RVTC are willing to consider providing access to other assets and services that are owned or controlled by the members of the RVTC that would assist in lowering the overall cost structure and shortening the design and construction schedule of a broadband network. These include:

- Access to GIS data, street maps, maps of terrain, GPS coordinates and locating services.
- Access to other communications networks through existing peering and traffic exchange agreements, to the extent not inconsistent with the terms of such agreements.

The RVP and RVTC contemplate that details regarding any such information would only be made available pursuant to the parties entering into non-disclosure agreements.

### **III. REGULATORY PROCESS**

#### **A. Background**

In recent years, the Texas legislature has adopted a deregulatory approach to promoting competition in communications services. In 2011, Texas adopted legislation eliminating much of the then-existing authority of the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUCT) to regulate service quality, customer service, and business practices of private telecommunications carriers.<sup>2</sup> Certificated telecommunications providers are authorized to operate in the public rights-of-way throughout the State subject to reasonable rights-of-way permitting and excavation requirements.

Under the Texas Local Government Code Sec. 283.052, et seq., certificated telecommunications providers are subject to a municipal rights-of-way fee that covers all applicable franchise fees and construction permits. Certificated telecommunications carriers are not subject to municipal service area or build-out requirements. There is no additional franchise authority required for a certificated telecommunications provider to offer broadband services.

Similarly, the State has eliminated local cable franchising and replaced it with a streamlined franchise process administered by the PUCT.<sup>3</sup> Under the Texas Utilities Code, Chapter 66, any entity holding a state-issued certificate of franchise to provide cable service need not obtain a cable franchise from the local jurisdictions specified within the franchise granted by the PUCT. Such entities are subject to a franchise fee up to 5% of gross revenues on the provision of cable services, as well as public, educational and government access programming requirements consistent with on the requirements that apply to the incumbent provider. Payment of the franchise fee covers all applicable construction fee permits.

State certificated cable operators are not subject to municipal service-area or build-out requirements. There is no additional franchise authority required for a state-certificate cable franchise holder to offer broadband services.

The laws of Texas and the rules of the PUCT enable private-sectors providers to offer virtually any voice, video, broadband Internet, or other communications service, with little, if any,

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<sup>2</sup> Acts 2011, 82nd R.S., Ch. 98, General and Special Laws of Texas (formerly SB980), available at <http://goo.gl/rOlSo>.

<sup>3</sup> Information and registration information of state-wide cable franchise certification available at <http://www.puc.texas.gov/industry/communications/business/sicfa/sicfa.aspx>

regulatory oversight, particularly by local governmental entities. Instead, local governmental authority over communications providers is generally limited to traditional police power authority to manage the public rights-of-way and zoning authority.

As a result, the primary regulatory issue faced by potential providers is that they, like all private-sector entities seeking to install, maintain, or operate wireline communications facilities within the public rights of way within the Bryan-College Station metro area, must obtain the necessary permits and authorizations, which will be applied in a non-discriminatory manner.

As indicated, an entity holding a Texas statewide cable franchise or local telecommunications certificate from the PUCT need not obtain additional franchising authority from individual communities but is subject to the applicable rights-of-way permitting and construction processes. An entity that holds neither a statewide cable franchise nor a telecommunications certificate must obtain a master rights-of-way use agreement with the Communities. The Communities have attempted to streamline and harmonize construction-permitting processes.

To the extent permissible under applicable law, the Communities are willing to consider various incentives proposed by Respondents to encourage and accelerate deployment of the Network that the Communities seek.

#### **B. Possible Forms of Assistance Relating to the Permitting/Regulatory Process**

To the extent not previously covered, the RVP, the RVTC, and/or the Research Valley Communities are willing to consider doing the following, as well as other forms of assistance that Respondents may suggest.<sup>4</sup>

- **Ombudsman.** The RVTC will provide an ombudsman that will act as a clearinghouse of information and help coordinate and facilitate communications and activities between a provider and the individual Communities.
- **SPOC.** Each Community will designate a single point of contact ("SPOC") for a broadband provider. The SPOC will be responsible for addressing all issues related to the Network, providing coordination across departments, ensuring the full cooperation of all departments with respect to relevant issues on the Network deployment and serving as a communications and troubleshooting resource for a provider.
- **Permit Processing.** Each Community will provide diligent and expeditious review and determinations of all applications for permits submitted by a provider in connection with the broadband network, including requests for any approvals necessary for construction, excavation, maintenance or other work within the rights-of-way and easements. All such work shall be in accordance with applicable regulations and ordinances and the

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To the extent a potential Network provider seeks access to the private rights-of-way and easements of Texas A&M, such access may be made available pursuant to private contract.



Community's standard processes and practices generally made available to all third parties.

- **Inspections.** In order to facilitate and ensure continuity and efficiency of inspections, each Community will designate qualified and knowledgeable inspectors, with the authority to inspect all construction, maintenance and related work in connection with each applicable permit to be issued by the Community. Each Community will use its best efforts to ensure that all such inspections are completed in an expeditious manner in accordance with applicable ordinances and the Community's processes and practices made available to all third parties.
- **Construction in the Public Rights of Way.** Each Community will use its best efforts to make the public rights of way available to a provider as rapidly as reasonably possible upon request in order to allow a provider and its contractors access to perform construction and other work related to the broadband network. Such access will be provided during regular business hours in accordance with applicable regulations and ordinances and the Community's standard processes and practices generally made available to all third parties.
- **Flexible Demand-Based Rollout.** The RVTC anticipates that network rollout would be based upon demonstrated demand by community residents and businesses, and the availability of necessary infrastructure. This is similar to the "fiberhood" model being undertaken in the construction of the gigabit network in Austin, Texas. The RFI seeks comments on the use of such a deployment.
- **Construction techniques.** The Communities are willing to cooperate with Respondents to review and consider reasonable construction methods proposed, including but not limited to, the following: (i) traditional open trench or boring within rights-of-way green space but not the roadway; (ii) slot cut microtrenching or trenching and boring in the curb or rights of way green space but not the concrete roadway; (iii) directional boring; (iv) fiber attached to buildings or aerial structures; and (v) installation of fibers to utility infrastructure, such as overlanding. All such review shall be in accordance with applicable regulations and ordinances and the Communities' standard processes and practices generally make available to all third parties.
- **Fees and Charges.** To the extent allowed by applicable law, the Communities will consider the provision of in-kind services to offset applicable fees, taxes, or charges.
- **Enterprise Zones.** The Communities are willing to consider making enterprise zone or economic development designations to reduce costs to the extent allowed by applicable law.
- **Pole Attachment Make-Ready.** Under normal conditions, the Communities will complete make-ready work for routine pole attachments within 15 days. Further, The

Communities will consider a process of certifying authorized third-party contractors to perform make-ready work.

- **Other.** The RVTC will furnish information about existing federal, State or local funds, grants and contracts that can be redirected to this program.

#### **IV. NO BINDING COMMITMENTS**

This RFI is being issued purely for information-gathering purposes and does not constitute a request for proposals or a contract for procurement under applicable Texas laws. Nothing in the RFI shall preclude the RVP, RVTC, or individual members of these organizations from obtaining relevant information from other sources or through other processes. Nor shall the RFI in any way create an association, partnership, or joint venture among Respondents and RVP, RVTC, or the individual members of these organizations. The issuance of the RFI and any subsequent response by a Respondent does not create a binding obligation on the part of the RVP, RVTC, or any Research Valley Community to enter into any form of agreement with the Respondent, for the development of a broadband network, or otherwise.

#### **V. NETWORK INFORMATION SOUGHT**

All submitted RFI responses should be organized in the same sequence as below, with responses referencing the appropriate corresponding RFI item(s). Respondents should respond to each item at the requested level of detail or should indicate a variance with a particular item and suggest alternate terms and, as applicable, and supply any supportive detail. Where the Respondent is requested to supply information, include that information in the body of the response, or reference the attachment where it is included.

##### **A. Description of Information Sought**

The RVP, on behalf of the RVTC and the Research Valley Communities, seeks information from Respondents related to the development, construction, operation, and maintenance, of a complete ultra-high-speed fiber-optic broadband communications Network within the Research Valley. As contemplated, such a Network should be a fully operational high-speed communications network using Internet Protocol technology (or better) and should allow users to send and receive information through the Internet as well as access other services and capabilities. The RFI is not limited to a specific technology but anticipates that most potential Respondents will discuss and provide information related to the development of a Fiber-to-the-home Active E, GPON and/or WDM/PON technologies to provide gigabit service to households, businesses, institutions, government entities, and residents throughout the Bryan-College Station Research Valley metro area. A response to the RFI should provide information on all active and passive infrastructure anticipated, including fiber cabling, active repeater equipment, uninterruptible power supplies, network cross-connections, software, ancillary equipment, and ongoing maintenance.

A Respondent should provide information on potential services, including a description of a complete system design, engineering, operation, monitoring, maintenance, and enhancement. The RVP anticipates that Network rollout would be based upon demonstrated demand by community residents and businesses and upon the availability of necessary infrastructure. The

RVP also anticipates that a provider will develop and provide or support the provision of retail services, including at a minimum those identified in Section V.B. below. The RFI seeks information on these assumptions.

## **B. Scope of the Network**

Respondents should provide information on the potential design, installation, operation and management of a broadband network. While it is contemplated that that Network rollout would be based upon demonstrated demand by community residents and businesses, the RVTC ultimately seeks to obtain full coverage throughout the Bryan-College Station Research Valley metro area and seeks information on such build-out. To the extent available, Respondents should provide details as to which features and which areas it is likely to construct, including the use of maps or other diagrams as necessary to sufficiently allow the RVTC to review the information. Similarly, Respondents are asked to describe which, if any, of the turnkey services described below, it would provide based on its recommended network.

Responses to the RFI should identify the following:

**Service Area:** A description of the geographic area within which a Respondent would anticipate developing a Network.

- Maps and build-out schedules (GIS shape file). If less than the entire area is being contemplated, Respondent should furnish an explanation as to how it would expect to accomplish.
- A discussion of the anticipated deployment strategy, scope, and timing of rollout, including if there would be multiple phases of the deployment and availability of services and, if so, what services would be made available during each phase. The discussion should identify the levels of committed demand necessary to trigger rollout obligations and any factors likely to influence the scope or timing of the rollout and explain how those factors impact the strategy.

**Service Offerings:** A description of proposed service offerings that the Respondent anticipates offering to institutional, business, government, residential, and other potential customers. Response should address 1) pricing strategy, including, if known, anticipated rates for services and minimum time period those rates would remain in place without escalation, and limitations on increases in rates over time, and 2) an explanation of Respondent's willingness to work with the Communities to develop unique pricing or packages for key community stakeholders and populations (e.g., government, university facilities, K-12 facilities and economically distressed areas), and 3) customer support model for each service.

### Internet Services

- Residential
- Multi-dwelling units (MDUs)

- Multi-tenant environments (MTEs)
- Dedicated business/institutional
- Wholesale Internet access service

Transport

- Point to Point
- Multipoint

Other Services

- Video services
- VOIP services
- Wireless services
- Other services

Responses should include a description of any other services that would be contemplated as likely.

**Technology Design:** A description of the Network technologies underlying the network solutions should be included in the response. Each description should include the following information:

- Technologies that would be utilized and the limitations of each technology, and if a variety of technologies are contemplated, a discussion of the factors likely to influence the choice of technologies;
- As much detail as possible regarding network design including, but not limited to: network design criteria, network elements, architecture, protocols, system reliability, availability, and operations and maintenance; and
- Network performance characteristics, including the range of offerings, the capacity and other factors relevant for the network solution.

**Service Availability:**

- Targets for uptime
- Redundancy

**Capacity:**

- Capacity per customer
- Number of fibers

**Maximum Number of End Point Customers**

**Financial Projections:** Respondents are requested to provide a pro forma financial statement, identifying projected capital outlays, ongoing operational costs, and expected revenues from wholesale and retail services for at least the first five years of construction and

operation. The statement should identify and quantify all key assumptions underlying the calculations.

**Material Tasks/Components:** Respondents shall provide a breakdown or outline of the material tasks or components of the design, construction, operation and management of the network and its rollout.

## **VI. ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES**

### **A. Availability of the RFI and Amendments**

Adobe Acrobat (PDF) and Microsoft Word versions of this RFI are available on the project website at: <http://www.researchvalley.org/rvtc>. Amendments to the RFI will be posted on the project website at: <http://www.researchvalley.org/rvtc>. Any amendments supersede prior provisions and are effective upon posting on the project website, and each potential respondent is responsible for checking the website to learn of any amendments.

### **B. Questions about the RFI**

The primary RFI contact for the RVP project team is: Chuck Martinez, Vice President of Innovation Services.

All general correspondence and any questions about this RFI must be submitted in writing to Chuck Martinez who can be contacted via email at: [cmartinez@researchvalley.org](mailto:cmartinez@researchvalley.org). The RVP, RVTC and individual Communities will not entertain any oral contacts regarding this RFI. The last date for questions will be 5:00 pm Central Time on Monday, November 11, 2013. All questions will be considered to be public and released with an answer through the project website as expeditiously as possible. The identity of the person responding to the question will not be disclosed.

### **C. Additional Material**

Respondents are encouraged to review the following material prior to submitting their responses.

- RFI Fact Sheet
- Applicable Texas statutes and regulations, Bryan, College Station, and Brazos County Ordinances.

### **D. Informational Session**

There will be an informational session for potential Respondents on Wednesday, October 23, 2013 at 8:30 a.m. Central Time at The Research Valley Partnership, which is located within the Texas A&M University Research Park at 1500 Research Parkway, Suite 270 in College Station, Texas. Potential respondents to the RFI unable to participate in person at the Informational Session may also elect to participate online; prior to the Informational Session, contact Chuck

Martinez, RVP Vice President of Innovation Services via email (cmartinez@researchvalley.org) to obtain log-in information.

**E. Project Calendar**

*Anticipated Event Dates*

- RFI Advertised and Issued: Tuesday, October 15, 2013
- Responses Due: Friday, November 15, 2013 no later than 12:00 p.m. Central Time

**F. Response Due Date and Submission**

Responses are requested to be submitted no later than 12:00 p.m. Central Time on Friday, November 15, 2013. Responses must be submitted electronically or via priority or certified mail to The Research Valley Partnership, Attention Chuck Martinez, 1500 Research Parkway Suite 270, College Station, Texas 77845. Two (2) hard copies and one (1) complete electronic version are required for any proposal submitted in hard copy format. Faxed responses will not be accepted.

Electronic responses must be submitted by email to Chuck Martinez, RVP Vice President of Innovation Services (cmartinez@researchvalley.org). All electronic files must be submitted in editable format in order to facilitate evaluation and planning. Word and PDF formats are acceptable.

**G. Process and Review of Responses**

Responses will be opened and reviewed internally at the convenience of the RVP and RVTC. All responses will be evaluated at RVP's and RVTC's discretion, and they will thereafter take follow-up steps as appropriate. To the extent consistent with applicable law, the RVP and RVTC are free to conduct follow-up interviews, meetings and correspondence with individual respondents to obtain additional information or seek clarification, without providing notice to the public or other Respondents.

The creation and release of the RFI does not in any way create any obligation or commitment on the part of the RVP, RVTC or individual Communities to seek follow-on proposals or develop a gigabit network, nor does the submission of a response create any kind of relationship, partnership or expectation of future business dealings between the parties.

**H. Clarification of Proposals**

Notwithstanding any other provision of this RFI, the RVP and RVTC reserve the right to:

1. Conduct discussions with any or all potential Respondents for the purpose of clarification;
2. Cancel or amend this RFI or issue other requests for information or requests for proposals;
3. Use any and all concepts presented in any response to obtain the most beneficial and effective path to achieving its desired goals for the project.

**I. Miscellaneous Provisions****1. Response Costs**

Respondents are responsible for all expenses they incur in preparing and submitting a response to this RFI or any follow-up discussions with the RVP and RVTC.

**2. Errors and Omissions in the RFI**

If the RVP becomes aware of an error or omission in the RFI, it will post a notice on the website. If it discovers an error or omission after the responses are submitted, it may in its discretion proceed or reissue the RFI. Even if it elects to reissue the RFI, the RVP will not be liable for any costs or damages incurred by any Respondent in preparing and submitting the original response.

**3. Ownership and Confidentiality of Responses**

The RVP and RVTC will not pay for any information requested, and all responses submitted become the property of the RVP and RVTC. Responses will not be returned and may be subject to disclosure pursuant to the federal Freedom of Information Act and/or the Texas Public Information Act, Section 552 of the Texas Government Code. The RVP and RVTC may receive information that may be confidential as part of a response. If a Respondent believes that any portion of its response includes proprietary or other confidential information, it must be clearly labeled the confidential information as such, and the Respondent must state the basis for the claim to confidential treatment. Unless otherwise required by law, RVP and RVTC will treat such information as confidential and will not disclose it to a third party without prior notification and authorization.

## Schedule of Assets and Regulatory Process

As part of the broadband initiative, the Research Valley Communities are willing to explore making certain infrastructure, assets, and services available to a Network provider, to the extent permissible by applicable law. The terms and conditions for such availability would be negotiated between the parties.

### Dark Fiber

### Terms

College Station	The City would consider making a limited amount of dark fiber available for lease or IRU, under non-discriminatory terms and conditions, and to the extent consistent with applicable law. In order to obtain information on the routes and availability of fiber, an entity would first have to enter into a non-disclosure agreement with the City.
Bryan	N/A
Brazos County	N/A

### Inner Duct

### Terms

College Station	The City would consider making a limited amount of innerduct along key routes in the City available for lease or IRU, under non-discriminatory terms, and to the extent consistent with applicable law. In order to obtain information on the routes and availability of fiber, an entity would first have to enter into a non-disclosure agreement with the City.
Bryan	N/A
Brazos County	N/A

### Pole Attachments

### Terms

College Station	<p>College Station's municipal electric utility owns approximately 7,000 poles, the majority of which can accommodate a new attachment without the need for significant make-ready work.</p> <p>Any entity seeking access would have to enter into the City's standard pole attachment agreement. Under normal conditions, the City will complete make-ready work for routine pole attachments</p>
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	<p>within 15 days. Further, the City will consider a process of certifying authorized third-party contractors to perform make-ready work.</p>
Bryan	<p>Bryan's municipal electric utility owns approximately 11,500 poles, the majority of which can accommodate new attachments without the need for significant make-ready work.</p> <p>Any entity seeking access would have to enter into the City's standard pole attachment agreement. Under normal conditions BTU will complete make-ready work for routine pole attachments within 15 days. Further, BTU will consider a process of certifying authorized third-party contractors to perform make-ready work.</p>
Brazos County	<p>BTU owns the majority of electric utility poles in Brazos County, the majority of which can accommodate new attachments without the need for significant make-ready work. Access is obtained pursuant to BTU's standard pole attachment agreement.</p> <p>Under normal conditions BTU will complete make-ready work for routine pole attachments within 15 days. Further, BTU will consider a process of certifying authorized third-party contractors to perform make-ready work.</p>

### **Rights-of-Way**

### **Terms**

College Station	<p>Section 3.2 of the City of College Station's Ordinances sets out the applicable permitting and construction standards for use of the public rights-of-way.</p> <p>Consistent with Texas Utilities Code, Chapter 66, the City allows any entity holding a state-issued certificate of cable franchise authority to occupy the public rights-of-way without obtaining a separate franchise. Certificate holders may also provide broadband services.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Such entities are subject to a franchise fee up to 5% of gross revenues. Payment of the franchise fee covers all applicable construction fee permits.</li> <li>• There are no build-out requirements.</li> </ul> <p>Consistent with the Texas Local Government Code Sec. 283.052, et seq., the City allows any entity holding a state-issued telecommunication certificate to occupy the public rights-of-way to provide telecommunications service without obtaining a separate franchise. Certificate holders may also provide broadband services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Such certificated telecommunications providers are not subject to a municipal rights-of-way fee that covers all applicable franchise fees and construction permits.</li> <li>• There are no build-out requirements.</li> </ul> <p>Broadband providers who are neither certificated cable operators nor certificated telecommunications providers must obtain a rights-of-way use agreement or franchise and must register to use the public rights-of-way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are no build-out requirements for broadband providers.</li> </ul> <p>All user of the public rights-of-way may be required to demonstrate insurance and indemnify the City, and must comply with the construction standards and permitting requirements. The right-of-way registration and permitting process and forms are available at <a href="http://goo.gl/pLM9IY">http://goo.gl/pLM9IY</a>.</p>
Bryan	<p>Section 106-98 of the City of Bryan Ordinances sets out the applicable permitting and construction standards for use of the public rights-of-way.</p>

	<p>Consistent with Texas Utilities Code, Chapter 66, the City allows any entity holding a state-issued certificate of cable franchise authority to occupy the public rights-of-way without obtaining a separate franchise. Certificate holders may also provide broadband services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Such entities are subject to a franchise fee up to 5% of gross revenues. Payment of the franchise fee covers all applicable construction fee permits.</li> <li>• There are no build-out requirements.</li> </ul> <p>Consistent with the Texas Local Government Code Sec. 283.052, et seq., the City allows any entity holding a state-issued telecommunication certificate to occupy the public rights-of-way to provide telecommunications service without obtaining a separate franchise. Certificate holders may also provide broadband services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Such certificated telecommunications providers are not subject to a municipal rights-of-way fee that covers all applicable franchise fees and construction permits.</li> <li>• There are no build-out requirements.</li> </ul> <p>Broadband providers who are neither certificated cable operators nor certificated telecommunications providers must obtain a rights-of-way use agreement or franchise and must register to use the public rights-of-way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are no build-out requirements for broadband providers.</li> </ul> <p>All user of the public rights-of-way may be required to demonstrate insurance and indemnify the City, and must comply with the construction standards and permitting</p>
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	requirements.
Brazos County	No franchises are required. All users of the public rights-of-way must obtain permits for excavation/construction. <a href="http://goo.gl/5gsVZ8">http://goo.gl/5gsVZ8</a> .

### **Construction Techniques**

All of the Communities are willing to cooperate with Respondents to review and consider reasonable construction methods proposed, including but not limited to, the following:

- Traditional open trench or boring within rights-of-way green space but not the roadway;
- Slot cut micro-trenching or trenching and boring in the curb or rights-of-way green space but not the concrete roadway;
- Directional boring;

All such review will be conducted in accordance with applicable regulations and ordinances and standard processes and practices that it generally makes available to all third parties.

### **Economic Development Authority**

The Research Valley Communities have the ability to utilize their economic development authority under Texas law to facilitate broadband deployment that advances commerce and creates jobs.



July 1, 2013

Mr. James Benham  
City Council Member, Place 6  
P.O. Box 9960  
College Station, TX 77842

Re: Gig U Initiative

Dear Councilman Benham,

I would like to personally thank you for your leadership in pursuing the necessary bandwidth for our community. It is a project long overdue yet perfect in its timing, with the recent announcement of the new Texas A&M Center for Innovation in Advanced Development and Manufacturing.

Our 1,000 acre master planned community is the epicenter of the emerging One Health Plus Bio Corridor in Bryan and College Station. With the announcement of the initial \$285 million federal award to create this new national biosecurity center at Texas A&M, we are actively planning for manufacturing, office, hospitality, retail and residential uses. The first major project is an \$91 million vaccine production facility that will help protect our nation's citizens from the threat of pandemics. We have a clear, near-term need for best-in-class communications capability that will help attract and retain the companies and intellectual capital that will be critical in establishing this new national center.

We stand ready to assist. Thank you again for your leadership on this important issue.

All the best,

TRADITIONS ACQUISITION PARTNERSHIP, LP

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'W. Spencer Clements, Jr.', with a stylized flourish at the end.

W. Spencer Clements, Jr.  
Principal



July 12, 2013

To Whom It May Concern,

Our business is a live answering service that is staffed 24/7. Our calls are received and sent on VOIP circuits. Each customer, over 350, has a unique profile and instructions on how they want their calls answered and messages delivered.

All of these operational parts require bandwidth; our company cannot operate without it any more than we could operate without electricity. We recently conducted a new office search in the Bryan/College Station area and were disappointed to see how many prospective locations had to be eliminated because of the lack of available bandwidth delivered over fiber.

This market is greatly underserved and the current fiber provider is very difficult to deal with. The current company has a single person assigned to commercial accounts and his work location is in Tyler which is over three hours from here. They are in bad need of some competition.

My average cost per call received and delivered is higher than my peers in the industry due to the above market prices that are being charged. This puts me in a cost disadvantaged position and limits the locations within this market where I can relocate my business.

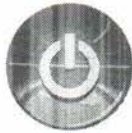
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Walter Hinkle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Walter Hinkle  
President  
Bryan 800 Answering Service

979-361-3301

[www.bryan800.com](http://www.bryan800.com)



exosent  
ENGINEERING

12600 Hwy 30, Suite 100  
College Station, TX 77845

979-703-1949

[aduggleby@exosent.com](mailto:aduggleby@exosent.com)  
[www.exosent.com](http://www.exosent.com)

July 1, 2013

James Benham  
Councilman - City of College Station  
1101 Texas Avenue  
College Station, Texas 77840  
[jbenham@cstx.gov](mailto:jbenham@cstx.gov)

Mr. Benham,

We understand that College Station is looking into providing high speed internet to the area. Our company would be very interested in this effort. We are an engineering company that specializes in steel fabrication, engineering design, heat transfer, and computational fluid dynamics. Our 20,000 square foot fabrication shop is on the edge of town, and as a result, our internet options are extremely limited. We do not have any options other than our current provider. However, we utilize super computers for our research, and internet speed can cause major productivity issues for us.

Exosent Engineering would be very interested in high speed internet coming to the Bryan/College Station area, and have no doubt that it would assist our business operations. Please let us know if there is any way we could be of assistance with this endeavor.

Best regards,

Andrew Duggleby, Ph.D., P.E.  
Chief Technology Officer



# Ecolyse, Inc.

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July 1, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

Ecolyse is a small biotechnology company located in College Station, Texas. We are strongly interested in having high-speed internet available to our company. The current options available are not fast enough, yet we do not have any other options. It has been one of the biggest frustrations for us as a small business.

Furthermore, the internet product that we do have is not ideal. We have many days where the service is down or extremely slow. This causes major loss in productivity for our company. As we deal with very large data files of DNA sequences that must be downloaded for processing, we can spend hours waiting for data to download. Fiber to our business would drastically change the way we operate on a daily basis.

Please let us know how we can be of assistance with this effort.

Best regards,



Lenae Huebner  
Business Operations Manager  
lenae@ecolyse.com





August 7, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

Broaddus & Associates is a small business ranked among the top 50 program managers by Engineering News Record. Our core business is owner-oriented program and project management for large capital construction programs. We also provide consulting in a number of areas (including sustainability, grants, disaster mitigation, to name a few). Our major markets include Federal, State, and Local Government; Healthcare; and Higher Education Institutions. At our foundation, we communicate, coordinate, collaborate, and control large capital construction programs. We leverage proprietary web-based project management software to control project data and documentation; monitor budgetary and accounting modules; and communicate through project/program dashboards, daily reporting, logs, etc. We set ourselves above our competition by rendering complete project information as effective, intuitive, and simplified for our clients and key stakeholders. In doing so, we automate and internalize project complexities.

Additionally, our College Station office specializes in construction technology. We utilize and develop technologies to push our industry forward. We currently process large 3D models (BIM models) into pertinent facility maintenance and operations (FO&M) information which we then import into client softwares to expedite building occupancy and extend the life of facilities through efficient facility management and operations. These models and the data we develop are very extensive and require collaboration and sharing at a national level. Our full potential of real-time collaboration with project teams across the country is dramatically hindered by our current bandwidth limits in the Brazos Valley. Our construction technology team also develops R&D projects to better our industry. Our partners in these efforts are global.

Members of our local office are also part of a national program team spread from Texas to Washington D.C. to provide industry specific software solutions (scheduling and performance metrics) for one of our country's largest Federal healthcare providers. We not only collaborate internally with our teams, but with Federal teams scattered across the United States, U.S. Territories and Outlying Areas. Again, we are limited on our ability to lead collaborative efforts out of the College Station area and often find ourselves being forced to travel to either Austin or Houston, or in some cases even further to effectively collaborate.

It has proven difficult for us to maintain the appearance of a technologically forward firm at the National level when we are hindered from doing business as usual in the Brazos Valley.

We are very much an avid supporter of any and all efforts to move a fiber-optic based ultra-high-speed internet solution to the Brazos Valley. Our productivity will be greatly increased, which results in a more realistic ability to further load our College Station office and offerings. We are vested in our efforts to grow our construction technology services right here in the Brazos Valley and remain nationally relevant, locally. Please let us know how we can further support this effort.

Best Regards,

Hyde Griffith, P.E., M.B.A., PMP  
Vice President - Brazos Valley Area Manager  
hgriffith@broaddusassociates.com