



KENDALL COUNTY BROADBAND FEASIBILITY STUDY INVITATION TO BID

INTRODUCTION: KENDALL COUNTY IS SEEKING PROPOSALS FOR A BROADBAND FEASIBILITY/ENGINEERING STUDY.

The purpose of this ITB is to solicit the preparation of a feasibility study, which will provide the County with the information needed to analyze, select and implement the best solutions to improve broadband connectivity across our entire county so that our networks are an asset for community and economic development. The County recognizes reaching our goal may require a mix of technologies and phased build-out plans. Flexibility, ingenuity and innovation along with a cohesiveness in design will be necessary to reach the ultimate goal of digitally connecting the County's entities through a world-class, next generation network.

Our vision:

All Kendall County residents will be able to use convenient, affordable world-class broadband networks that enable us to survive and thrive in our communities and across the globe.

To achieve this vision, we seek the best path to a ubiquitous broadband network that is ultimately scalable to one Gigabit to homes, businesses and anchor institutions recognizing that this may require a 10 Gigabit (or greater) backbone. We recognize that there are a variety of models that could be used to achieve our vision and we are open to all of them, including incenting private sector investment, engaging in a public-private partnership, forming a new cooperative or operating as a government utility.

We expect this to be highly interactive and iterative process, with excellent and ongoing communications between the selected vendor and the steering committee so that at the end of

the study process, the committee clearly understands the best alternatives for moving forward to achieve the vision.

DESCRIPTION OF KENDALL COUNTY

Kendall County has been the fastest growing county in Illinois. Kendall County is a mixture of rural and urban communities. The south and west rural portion of the county are underserved for high-speed internet.

Kendall County website - <https://www.co.kendall.il.us/home>

Highway Map - <https://www.co.kendall.il.us/Home/ShowDocument?id=8262>

COUNTY CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE FEASIBILITY STUDY PROJECT

To support the selected vendor, the county will, at a minimum, provide the following:

- Recruitment of a project steering team
- Recruitment of focus group participants
- Access to County GIS data
- Access to historical County Permit Data
- Other public information as needed

SCOPE OF WORK/REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

This section outlines the study and report requirements.

Section A – Current assessment and market demand

- Review of the competitive environment
 - Complete an inventory of existing fiber networks within the county, including ownership and availability for use by other network providers.
 - Provide an overview of current broadband providers' services, pricing strategies and coverage area. To the extent possible, determine and analyze the investment and deployment plans of incumbent providers.

- Provide an assessment of the services available to our existing and prospective businesses and how that impacts our economic development efforts.
- Provide a market study to establish a likely market penetration rate and clarify which benefits from a new countywide network might be most important to the residents and businesses. Include information from the following sources
 - Available market and census data
 - Local random sample countywide survey of residents and businesses
 - Focus groups of key constituencies
 - Include a sample survey your firm has used for similar project and the resulting report as an appendix of your proposal

Section B – Technology options

- Determine the best technology path for our county
 - What are the broadband capacities and considerations that are necessary now and in the future that will enable our county to be economically competitive? What technologies can provide broadband services at those speeds?
 - What are the technologies best suited to the various areas of the County based on geography and demographics?
 - What opportunities exist to provide a protected-ring fiber network that would connect businesses and anchor institutions such as schools, libraries, hospitals, public safety, cities, institutions of higher education and community support organizations?
- Options for services provision to include:
 - Mix of technologies and phased build out plans with multiple platforms scalable to 1 gigabit and include wireless, fiber, ARMER towers, cable, etc.
 - Options should include scenarios using what already exists within the County, with a minimum service level of 100/100 Mbps.

- Business models and pro forma to be analyzed to include but not be limited to:
 - a) Build on existing networks: Options to combine or collaborate with existing providers to provide middle and last mile coverage to the underserved and unserved, with special emphasis on leveraging CAF2 dollars.
 - b) Create new networks:
 1. Open Access: The County would finance and contract to build the network and invite other service providers to contract to deliver services over the network.
 2. Proprietary Network:
 - i. The County would incent a private sector partner, including existing cooperatives, the creation of a new cooperative, or other entity to invest, build and operate a network by using development powers as necessary.
 3. Other options that might involve multiple local entities or other scenarios as contractor sees appropriate.
- Conduct pre-engineering study(s) at sufficient depth to estimate costs and approximate implementation timeframes for full network implementation.
 - This evaluation should include an assessment of all available mainstream high-speed technologies either alone or in combination and include an assessment and consideration of both Fiber to the Premise (FTTP) and wireless technologies. All parts, materials, and service proposed must be currently available on the market and in continuing production (no discontinued manufacturers or parts).
 - Assessment of primary and redundant backhaul connection options between local network and the Internet.
 - Define the proposed service area and create a conceptual fiber route and high level design to provide the greatest coverage, showing businesses and publicly owned facilities passed within ½ mile on both sides of the fiber route.

- Use algorithmic tools to combine the map data with historical cost data to provide an estimated cost to offer scalable broadband service for all options identified. Costs will be calculated by service area and anticipated route miles to determine capital costs for fiber optic mainline, access equipment, cell tower backhaul, routers, and switches. Costs should be all inclusive of any design, initial configuration and installation costs.

Section C – Partnership options

- Provide examples of who might be a prospective partner with a brief summary of how each relationship would function.
- What sectors, groups and individuals may help our county achieve the broadband goals? Please identify synergies and sharing opportunities that exist with providers and customers to include but not limited to:
 - ISP Providers, Telecoms, Cooperatives, Statewide telecom networks, Government entities, NGO's, K-12 and higher education, including library systems, Healthcare providers and the industry and business community

Section D – Financing and Legal Considerations

- Provide financing options to include, but not limited to general obligation bonds, revenue bond, public/private partnerships, USDA RUS, other state and federal funding and others where appropriate.
- Provide an assessment of legal requirements, risks and regulations relevant to the building or operation of a network and partnership arrangements.
- Prepare financial projections for at least two project scenarios as selected by the project steering team:
 - Options Identified
 - Operational Cash flow for expenditures
 - One Time and Recurring Capital Expenses

- Business and technical expertise needed
- Organizational support
- Community Support

Section E – Optional Fiber Map

- Map existing the location of existing fiber and broadband-related electronics and available broadband speeds available by provider. This information should be provided in a format usable by the County GIS systems.
- Include this as an add-on to the entire project and list it as a sperate and optional cost as part of the proposal

PROPOSED SCHEDULE

- All proposals due at 9:00 am **CST** on June 14, 2021.
- Project implementation schedule and phasing - Please provide an estimated project timeline. Timeline should include:
 - Estimated project start and end dates.
 - Proposed date(s) for pre-project meeting with County’s feasibility study project committee.
 - Proposed dates for conducting a community presentation to collect public input and review preliminary findings.
 - Proposed date for presentation to County Board. Board meetings are typically the **dates/time**.
- Consultant will provide biweekly updates on progress during the work period, via either email, or phone calls, to the designated County Representative and/or steering committee.
- Consultant will provide fifteen copies of final feasibility study along with a digital copy

PROPOSALS

The following will be considered minimal contents of the proposal. Limit proposal to 10 pages.

1. Provide a restatement of the goals, objectives and project tasks to demonstrate the responder's view of the project and your approach to this project. Please reference the **Study/Report Requirements: Sections A – D** in your responses.

2. Provide on your background and experience in the following areas:
 - a. Network: Outline the direct knowledge and experience your company has regarding broadband solutions.
 - b. Financial: Describe direct experience and knowledge your company has creating and analyzing financial plans and models including capital requirements, operational pro formas, and financing options.
 - c. Regulatory/Legal: Describe any direct experience and knowledge your company has in analyzing and interpreting the regulatory and legal landscape and providing analysis and guidance on these issues as they pertain to the various options contained in the proposal.
 - d. Services: Describe any direct experience and knowledge your company has in providing community and business community analysis and guidance surrounding broadband services.
 - e. Project Management: Outline your company's direct knowledge and experience with structured project management.
 - f. Partnerships: Share your company's experience in working with state and local governments and public-private sector collaborations.

3. Conflicts of Interest: Provide any information on prospective conflicts of interests, including existing or financial relations with equipment vendors, ISPs or other firms.

4. References: Include at least three references from previous similar projects.
Identify key personnel who will conduct the project and provide detail of their training and work experience. No change in key personnel assigned to the project

will be allowed without the approval of the local project team. Address experience in working with rural communities, schools and townships in regard to this type of study.

Note: Subcontractors working for the contractor must meet all the requirements of the Invitation to Bid (ITB) and any contract between the contractor and the subcontractor must include all contract terms agreed to between the County and the successful contractor.

5. Detailed work plan to include:
 - a. Tasks to be accomplished and the budget hours to be expended for each task and subtask. (This will be used as a work plan and managing tool for basis of invoicing.)
 - b. Identify project timeline with deliverables and key milestones.
 - c. Provide detail regarding local involvement and services expected to complete the project. A minimum of 3 status meetings are to be contained in the work plan in addition to any data collection or input/review meetings.
 - d. Outline the project management approach that your company will employ to execute this project and identify individual(s) responsible for the various areas in the outline.
 - e. Identify areas of risk for the project based on the contractors detailed work plan and schedule for all aspects of the project including but not limited to financial, construction, legal, product availability, environmental and archaeological.
 - f. Provide detailed cost estimate of the study, including known project expenses, professional hourly rates and multipliers and estimated service/task hours with a “Not to Exceed” cap. Other ancillary expenses related to the completion of the study will be discussed on a case-by-case basis.
 - g. Commit to working closely with Steering Committee and County Board

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The County will evaluate all proposals using the following criteria to determine the lowest responsible bidder:

- Experience and qualifications of the vendor and personnel assigned to this project
- Clear understanding of this project
- Ability to complete the study and report requirements listed in this ITB
- Clear technical proficiency for the mix of technologies and cohesiveness of the network proposed
- Project work plan and timeline
- Work experience in small and rural communities including counties, cities and townships
- References
- Pricing

After evaluating all proposals, the County may choose to interview the top candidates. After evaluation and possible interviews, the County Board will pursue a professional services agreement with the lowest responsible bidder.

SELECTION

Selection of the consultant for this project will be based on the criteria noted above. Upon approval from the board, the county will enter into negotiations with the selected consultant to develop a Professional Services Agreement and finalize the work plan including budget hours. Should the county and the selected consultant fail to satisfactorily reach agreement to the work plan, including budget, the county may enter into negotiations with the respondent judged second in the evaluation process, or the county may re-advertise for proposals.

INSTRUCTION TO PROPOSERS

Requirements: The following will apply to all proposals received:

1. All proposals must be comprehensive and complete for the services requested. The accepted proposal shall be contracted by Kendall County for the total of the submitted proposal. Kendall County will not be responsible for any additional charges above the accepted

proposal unless additional services are negotiated and accepted by Kendall County by addendum to the original contract. The terms that will be included in the contract for the services are attached to this ITB as the "Agreement." By submitting a proposal, proposers are agreeing to those terms found in the Agreement.

2. Kendall County will not be responsible for any expenses incurred by the proposer in preparing and submitting proposals. All proposals shall provide a straightforward, concise delineation of your capabilities to satisfy the requirements of this request. Emphasis should be on completeness and clarity of content.

3. The proposer must sign in the firm or corporate name and must bear the original longhand signature of a principal legally authorized to sign contracts. The name of each person signing should be typed or printed below the signature.

4. The individual signing the document for the proposing organization shall initial all erasures or corrections.

5. All variations to the stated specifications must be described in detail (free from ambiguity).

6. All proposer must be appropriately licensed and authorized to conduct business within the State of Illinois.

7. The failure of a proposer to promptly supply information requested in this ITB or other information subsequently requested may result in the proposer being eliminated from consideration.

8. The contents of the proposal submitted by the successful proposer and this ITB (including the Scope of Service, Instructions to Proposer, and any and all attached, referenced, or incorporated documents) will become a part of the contract awarded as a result of these specifications.

9. Kendall County reserves the right to request clarifications or corrections to proposals.

10. All proposals submitted shall be considered firm offers and will be binding for ninety (90) calendar days following the Due Date, unless, upon Kendall County's request, the proposer agrees to an extension.

11. The proposer acknowledges that all proposal materials become the property of Kendall County and, as such, may be available to the public. By submitting a proposal, proposer acknowledges that Kendall County's decision is final, binding, and conclusive upon the proposer for all purposes.

12. The proposer is expected to comply with the true intent of this ITB taken as a whole and shall not avail itself of any errors or omission to the detriment of the services or Kendall County. Should the proposer suspect any error, omission, or discrepancy in the specifications or instructions, the proposer shall immediately notify Kendall County in writing, and Kendall County will issue written corrections or clarifications. The proposer is responsible for the contents of its proposal and for satisfying the requirements set forth in the ITB. Proposer will not be allowed to benefit from errors in the document that could have been reasonably discovered by the proposer in the process of putting the proposal together.

County's Rights: Kendall County reserves the following rights: (1) to waive or deviate from the procedures or timetable identified in the ITB; (2) to supplement, amend, or otherwise modify the ITB, without notice; (3) to request additional information from proposer; (4) to reject any or all proposals; and (5) to waive minor defects and technicalities.

Questions and Interpretations: Submit questions about the documents to the County Administrator via email skoepfel@co.kendall.il.us. Replies will be issued to all proposers of record as Addenda to the appropriate attachment and will become part of the Agreement. Questions will not be responded to by oral clarification.

Failure to request clarification will not waive responsibility of comprehension of the documents and performance of the work in accordance with the intent of the documents. Signing the Proposal will be considered as implicitly denoting thorough comprehension of intent of the documents.

Submittal: Submit completed proposal and other required documents via email to skoepfel@co.kendall.il.us . Submissions will only be accepted by e-mail. The subject line of the e-mail should state “2021 Rural Broadband Study.” Proposals must be submitted no later than June 14, 2021 at 9am.

Submission of a proposal confers no rights on the proposer to selection or to a subsequent contract. This ITB process is for the Kendall County's benefit only and is intended to provide Kendall County with competitive information to assist in selection of services. All decisions on compliance, evaluation, terms and conditions shall be made solely at Kendall County's discretion.

Opening: The proposals shall be opened and publicly read on June 15, 2021 at 3:00 pm in the Kendall County Office Building at 111 W Fox St, Yorkville IL 60560 by the County Administrator. Each bid shall be analyzed to ensure that all stipulations have been satisfied. The results shall be recorded and forwarded with all bidding documents to the Kendall County Board. Attendance is NOT required.

Award: It is the intent of Kendall County to award the proposal to the lowest responsible proposer who has met all specifications, terms, and conditions of this ITB.

Rejection of Proposals: The Kendall County Board, Kendall County Administrative/HR Committee, and Kendall County Administrator reserve the right to reject any or all proposals and to waive any or all irregularities. Kendall County may seek clarification from a proposer at any time and failure to respond promptly is cause for rejection.

Disqualification: Kendall County reserves the right to disqualify proposals, before or after opening, upon evidence of collusion with intent to defraud or other illegal practices upon the part of the proposer. The proposer's failure to agree to the terms and conditions of the attached Agreement or otherwise meet the mandatory requirements will result in the disqualification of the proposer's proposal from further consideration as an unresponsive proposal.

Execution of Contract: Notwithstanding any delay in the preparation and execution of the contract, each proposer shall be prepared, upon written notice of proposal acceptance, to commence work within 10 days following receipt of official written order of Kendall County to proceed, or on date stipulated in such order. A sample contract with preferred terms from Kendall County is attached as EXHIBIT A.

ITB TIMELINE

Release ITB	April 26
Questions due to Kendall County	May 17
Kendall County responses provided	May 31
Proposals due	June 21 (deadline extended)
Interviews, if necessary	June
Approval of contract by county board	July 20

Proposal related questions will only be accepted by emailed to skoepfel@co.kendall.il.us

The above dates are subject to change at the discretion of Kendall County.

PRIMARY CONTACT

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