

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Consulting

KERR-TAR REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS REGIONAL BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

Proposals due September 25, 2017

Requested By:



**Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments
1724 Graham Avenue
Henderson, NC 27536**

A. Overview

The Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments (KTRCOG) seeks the professional services of a qualified consultant to conduct a Community Broadband Assessment and develop a Broadband Infrastructure Strategy for four counties in the Kerr-Tar region of North Carolina (hereinafter "Project"). The Project will be administered by the KTRCOG and funded by the counties of Franklin, Granville, Vance and Warren. The KTRCOG is the council of government for North Carolina's Region K, which includes the 5 counties north of the Research Triangle region of North Carolina. The KTRCOG provides technical assistance to the local governments in our region and facilitates partnerships to reach regional goals.

The Project covers Franklin, Granville, Vance and Warren Counties. The purpose of this project is to develop a plan to advance broadband infrastructure investment in the region by conducting community assessments/profiles; creating RFP's to expand broadband availability and creating a broadband strategic roadmap for the four counties. The project will fund broadband community assessment/profiles for the counties by reviewing existing inventory, conducting consumer and business surveys and mapping the demand aggregation. Based on the demand aggregation results, an RFP will be developed to solicit broadband service providers. The consultant will manage the RFP process and assist with contracts with selected vendors.

An expectation of the consultant will be to educate local government elected officials and managers on topics such as legal and regulatory matters, net neutrality, "broadband friendly" policies and administrative procedures for local governments, and types of public/private partnership models.

The consultant will meet with communities to identify findings, share information and ideas, and discuss emerging strategies. The consultant will combine findings into a comprehensive Broadband Infrastructure Strategy.

B. Description of Services Requested

1. Consult with County Commissioners and staff about their broadband goals for each of the 4 counties.
2. Conduct and compile a broadband asset inventory from local governments in the 4 county region.
3. Develop and implement a demand aggregation study for residents and businesses.
4. Develop and manage an RFP process to solicit broadband service providers.
5. Educate local government officials and managers on relevant topics regarding broadband such as those listed in Section A, paragraph 3.

6. Combine findings into a comprehensive regional Broadband Infrastructure Strategy.

C. Proposal Instructions

1. Deadline

Proposals must be received by 5:00 PM eastern time on September 25, 2017.

2. Submittal Instructions

Proposals should be emailed (dcox@kerrtarcog.org) or delivered to:

Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments
ATTN: Diane Cox
1824 Graham Avenue
Henderson, NC 27536

3. Project Contact

The point of contact for the Project is Diane Cox, Executive Director for the KTRCOG. Prospective firms may make inquiries to obtain clarification of the requirements contained in this Request for Proposals (RFP). All inquiries must be submitted in writing by email to the following address: dcox@kerrtacog.org. A response will be issued typically within two business days.

4. Proposal Format

Proposals should be limited to 10 numbered pages or less. Please include a cover letter that identifies a contact person and all contact information. The following format is not required but is encouraged to provide consistency between proposals, aiding in evaluation and comparison. If the format is modified please include the following information at a minimum.

- a) Project Approach. Describe your team's approach to successfully delivering the Project. Provide details on how each task will be completed.
- b) Relevant Project Experience. Provide a summary of your experience with similar projects, including location and client contact information.
- c) Qualifications of Personnel. Provide relevant experience and qualifications of all personnel assigned to the Project.
- d) Plan for Completion. Provide an outline for keeping the project on schedule and within budget. Include a projected schedule for completion of significant milestones and the draft and final Plan.

e) References. Provide contact information for at least two references for clients familiar with your work.

D. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals should address all aspects of the RFP and clearly express an understanding of the requirements and qualifications to conduct these services in a thorough and efficient manner. Evaluation of proposals will be performed by KTRCOG staff. Proposals will be evaluated on the firm's ability to meet the requirements of this RFP. Some evaluation criteria, among other factors, will include:

1. Project approach and demonstrated understanding of the goals for the project;
2. Familiarity with and understanding of the nature and challenges of the region and stakeholders;
3. Creative approaches for deliverables that can be easily utilized in a variety of mediums including hard copy and digital reports, websites, etc.
4. Qualifications and availability of staff assigned to the Project;

Final selection and contracting will be subject to approval by KTRCOG.

E. Tentative Project Schedule

In order to ensure high-quality products, adequate time for review and revisions will be scheduled and included in the contractual agreement. All meeting materials (maps, presentations, handouts, displays, etc.) will be submitted for review prior to scheduled meetings. Timelines for reviews and revisions will be detailed in the contractual agreement. **The following schedule is provided as a guideline only.**

August 25, 2017	Request for Proposals advertised
September 25, 2017	Proposals due to KTRCOG
September 26 – October 23, 2017	Selection and Contracting
November 1, 2017	Notice to Proceed
July 1, 2018	Service Provider RFP's Finalized
October 1, 2018	Draft Regional Broadband Infrastructure Strategy Due
November 1, 2018	Final Regional Broadband Infrastructure Strategy Due

F. Administrative Information

1. All proposals become the property of KTRCOG upon submission and will only be returned at KTRCOG's option. Any restrictions on the use of the data contained within must be clearly stated in the Proposal itself.
2. The cost of preparing, submitting and presenting a proposal is the sole expense of the consultant. KTRCOG is not liable for any costs prior to issuance of a signed contract.

3. KTRCOG reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to consider alternatives, to wave irregularities and to re-solicit the request for proposals.
4. KTRCOG reserves the right to cancel the RFP in part or in its entirety. This solicitation of proposals in no way obligates KTRCOG to award a contract.
5. KTRCOG makes no guarantees to any proposing firm until such time KTRCOG approves the negotiated contract.
6. All Proposals must be valid for a period of 90 days after the due date.