

LEGAL NOTICE

INVITATION to BID

The **Town of Ridgefield** invites all interested parties to submit sealed bids on the following:

BID DUE DATE: Thursday, November 2, 2023
BID DUE TIME: 11:00 AM
BID ITEM: RFP - Town Wide Broadband Design Proposal
BID NUMBER: 24-01

Terms and conditions as well as the description of items being bid are stated in the specifications. **Specifications may be obtained at the following address:**

**Town of Ridgefield
Jacob Muller
400 Main Street
Ridgefield, CT 06877
203 - 431 - 2720**

The bid submission shall be hand delivered, emailed or faxed to the following contact below:

**TOWN OF RIDGEFIELD
DIRECTOR OF PURCHASING
BID NUMBER: 24-01
400 MAIN STREET
RIDGEFIELD, CT. 06877**

Bids must be received no later than the date and time stated above at the Purchasing Director's office via, hand delivery, email or fax. **For further information, please call Jacob Muller at (203) 431-2720 or E-Mail at purchasing@ridgefieldct.gov, Fax Number (203) 431-2723.**

Bid Documents available at www.ridgefieldct.gov in the Purchasing section under Departments

Results may be viewed at www.ridgefieldct.gov in the Purchasing Section under Departments after the bid opening.

Request for Proposals

Fiber Based Open Access Broadband Services for Ridgefield, CT

Town of Ridgefield

400 Main Street

Ridgefield, CT 06877

Issue Date: Tuesday, October 3, 2023

Due Date: Thursday, November 2, 2023 at 11:00 AM E.S.T. - RFP #24-01

RFP Announcement

The Town of Ridgefield has initiated a Request for Proposals (RFP) process to identify and procure a qualified vendor to design a town wide open-access Fiber to the Premises (FTTP) network throughout the community.

Eligible Respondents

The Town of Ridgefield seeks a vendor who has demonstrated experience in the design of broadband infrastructure. Vendors shall be familiar with Connecticut, local municipal laws and policies, and have had prior success designing open access fiber projects.

About Ridgefield

Ridgefield is suburban New England town located in Fairfield County Connecticut with a population of 25,033 people and over 10,000 residential and commercial addresses. The town has a total area of 35.0 square miles, of which 34.4 square miles is land and 0.5 square miles is water. Ridgefield is bordered by the towns of North Salem and Lewisboro in Westchester County, New York to the west, Danbury to the north, Wilton to the south and Redding to the east. The Ridgefield Public School District is a top 10 rated district with a population of approximately 4,550 students PK-12.

Project Background

Ridgefield seeks to eliminate reliability and affordability barriers to internet access for its residents and businesses. Many communities struggle with the quality and reliability of their connection(s) while working from home, which was exasperated during the pandemic. Students also experience the challenges of remote learning, weak security, and connectivity issues. Ridgefield must rely on more than market forces to remedy these issues. The Town is seeking alternative solutions to these problems and with support from Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WestCOG) has performed a broadband feasibility study for recommendations and strategies towards implementation of fiber based broadband network.

The Broadband Feasibility Studies were designed to assist municipalities to understand the operational implications, important risk factors, and a realistic cost framework for developing and operating a Town-owned fiber optic infrastructure. You can find these studies at WestCOG's Broadband Project Page:

<https://westcog.org/regional-services/broadband/>

Ridgefield is interested in a high-speed fiber network that will be designed to bring high-speed connectivity to every home and business, enable applications like telehealth, support Smart City services, and future-generation wireless networks. Everyone will have an opportunity to have a fast, reliable, affordable internet connection that will support future applications, increase bandwidth demands, high-speed business transactions, consistent home connectivity, fast and stable Wi-Fi connectivity, and better communications for all. Allowing the community to be well prepared for greater economic opportunity and an even better quality of life.

This RFP is requesting vendors to submit a proposal to design a town wide broadband system.

Network Design Parameters

Ridgefield seeks respondents that will design a fully fiber-based architecture providing long-term scalability and reliability that offers:

Fiber strand capacity that includes;

- Provisions for direct dedicated connections to businesses and residential "power" users.
- Physical architecture (e.g., handhole placement, backbone routes, etc.) anticipating full deployment to all homes and businesses.
- Capacity to each customer that is sufficient to provide redundancy and support for future unknown applications, especially current and potential intensive municipal applications.
- The ability to support to Quantum computing and network. Low latency to reduce the number of hops to the Internet backbone.

Backbone topology capable of supporting connections over diverse paths from one or more central hub locations to fiber distribution cabinets distributed throughout the municipality to facilitate high-availability service offerings.

Fiber distribution plant placed in underground conduit (as opposed to direct burial cable) to facilitate repairs and capacity upgrades more readily. If applicable, active components would be placed in environmentally hardened shelters and/or cabinets equipped with backup power generation and/or batteries, as appropriate, capable of sustaining services in the event of extended power outages.

Fiber path diversity to public facilities in order to maintain continuous service even if one path is broken.

Underground communications conduit pathways, or fiber, that could be utilized by the municipality for future scalability.

Information on any advanced wireless options, where applicable.

Information on approach to micro-trenching and directional boring, where applicable.

Fiber routes that can coincide with existing and proposed planned utility, roadway, and related capital improvement projects to reduce cost and minimize disruption where possible. Generally, the proposed routes should mirror existing wiring routes (i.e. overhead or buried, etc.).

Equitable Design: The design will create an opportunity for all residents and businesses to have affordable access to high-quality internet service.

Future Oriented: The partnership will accommodate and assume ever- changing technology and consider ways to evolve services to meet future needs in addition to today's needs.

Additional Considerations

This RFP recognizes that ubiquitous access may seem implausible for some providers. The RFP process is designed to work with the successful respondent(s) to design a system that has an attainable constructability and installation.

RFP Response Requirements

Ridgefield requests the following information—in concise and clear detail—from respondents. All responses must adhere to the following response requirements and page requirements. All responses shall include the below and use the appropriate response headers.

- Cover Letter: Please include company name, address of corporate headquarters, address of nearest local office, contact name for response, and that person's contact information (address, phone, cell, email, other). Keep response to one (1) page.
- Experience: Provide a statement of experience discussing your firm's past performance, capabilities, and qualifications. Identify other networks your firm has designed, built, maintained, or operated; include the levels of broadband speed, availability, and adoption among different categories of end users and unique capabilities or attributes. Discuss partnerships with other service providers, government, or nonprofit entities you have undertaken, particularly any involving dark fiber leasing. Describe the nature of the projects and your firm's role. For entities currently providing communication services in Connecticut, describe your current service footprint, including a description of the type of infrastructure and services you currently offer, and the technology platform(s) used. Explain how your firm is a suitable respondent for this project. Keep response to no more than three (3) pages.

- Schedule: Describe your proposed schedule for the design of the town wide broadband system. Offer a timeline with key milestones. Are there areas of the municipality you would recommend be constructed first? Keep response to two (2) pages (one page for response, one page for schedule).
- High-level design: Produce a high-level design that visualizes your preliminary concept. There are several sets of data that will be essential in developing a high-level design:
 - Fiber backbone: An overview of existing Fiber
 - Technical and Operations: At a high level, summarize the technological and operational approach you would use for this project.
 - Equitable and inclusive: Explain how your design will provide equitable and inclusive services. There is interest in guarantying equitable access and affordable internet services for both residents and the business community and will look to the partner to propose solutions that meet these goals. Keep response to one (1) page.
 - Cost: The design cost should be inclusive to detail a “wall to wall” project design throughout the community.
- References: Provide a minimum of three (3) references, including contact information, from previous contracts or partnerships. Keep response to two (2) pages.

RFP Process and Timeline

Proposals are due by the end of the application period, Thursday, November 2, 2023 at 11:00 AM EST. Submissions should be directed to; Jacob Muller, Director of Purchasing, purchasing@ridgefieldct.gov.

Submissions should be provided in PDF format, as a single file. The file may be attached to the e-mail, or, in case of a large submission (larger than 10 MB), linked in the e-mail. Recipients should enable delivery and read receipts in their e-mail client. No other confirmation will be given.

Review and contracting

The Town will evaluate proposals received after close of the application period. At this time, Ridgefield may invite additional information from selected proposers, including but not necessarily limited to, samples of other work or an in-person interview.

It is expected that proposers will be notified of decisions on their submission by TBD. The Town may award the project in part or in full to one or more proposers, and to cancel or to reissue this RFP. Any award will not be final until a contract has been negotiated and executed.

Location of posting

This RFP may be found online at the Town of Ridgefield website under the Purchasing Department until Thursday, November 2, 2023 at 11:00 AM EST. It is the responsibility of interested parties to retrieve and store a copy of the RFP beyond this date.

Pre-bid meeting

A pre-bid meeting will be held Tuesday, October 17, 2023 at 2:00PM EST. The meeting will be held by videoconference. Parties interested in attending should e-mail Jacob Muller, Director of Purchasing, purchasing@ridgefieldct.gov for an invitation link. Attendance, by phone or virtually, is optional and is not required in order to respond to this RFP.

Inquiries

Proposers may submit questions on this RFP by Tuesday, October 24, 2023 at 4RFP:00PM EST. Questions should be directed to Jacob Muller, Director of Purchasing, purchasing@ridgefieldct.gov. Answers will be posted online on the Town of Ridgefield's website where posted this RFP on a rolling basis until the RFP had closed.

No questions will be accepted by other forms of communication.

Addenda and supplements

Should the Town amend or adjust this RFP, such changes will be posted online where this RFP is posted. It is the responsibility of proposers to check for changes to the RFP.

TOWN OF RIDGEFIELD CONNECTICUT

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS

1. The Town of Ridgefield will accept bids via email, fax or hand delivered; if emailed send to purchasing@ridgefieldct.gov , fax 203-431-2723, hand delivered shall be in sealed envelope clearly marked with the bid title. Email and fax submission will use the time stamp of the local device all hand delivered bids will be time stamped when received.
2. Withdrawals of or amendments to bids received later than the time and date specified for bid opening will not be considered.
3. The Board of Selectmen of the Town of Ridgefield reserves the right to accept or reject any or all options, bids or proposals; to waive any technicality in any bid or part thereof, and to accept any bid deemed to be in the best interest of the Town of Ridgefield, Connecticut.
4. Bids may be held by the Town of Ridgefield for a period not to exceed forty-five (45) days from the opening of bids for the purpose of reviewing bids and investigating the qualifications of bidders prior to the awarding of the contract.
5. Insurance requirements, if any, must be submitted with the bid. This includes any Hold Harmless requirements as well as Certificates of Insurance for the full amounts specified. **Unauthorized changes** to these forms, i.e. adding, striking out and/or changing any words, language or limits **will cause the bidder to be disqualified**.
Please Note: Certificates of Insurance, if required, MUST name the Town of Ridgefield as **Additional Insured**. Failure to do so will mean disqualification from the Bid. There will no exceptions.
6. **Sales Tax**: In accordance with the provisions of Special Act No. 77-98, as amended, and Section 12-412(a) of the Connecticut General Statutes, sales of tangible personal property and services to the Town are not subject to the Connecticut Sales and Use Tax, and such tax shall not be included as part of the bid.

7. **Bidding Schedule:**
 - Bid Close; Thursday November 2, 2023 at 11:00 AM, complete instructions listed in the RFP Packet.
 - Pre-Bid Meeting (Virtual) will be held on; Tuesday, October 17, 2023 at 2:00 PM. Refer to RFP Packet for meeting link.
 - RFI shall be submitted by; Tuesday, October 24, 2023 by 4:00 PM
8. **Contractor's Qualification Statement:** The Contractor's Qualification Statement must be filled out as part of the bid package and the experience and references listed therein will be one to the determining factors in the awarding of the bid.
9. **Hold Harmless Agreement:** In order for the bid to be considered valid, the Contractor **must** sign the enclosed hold harmless agreement. Bids submitted without the signed hold harmless agreement will be rejected.
10. **Questions:** Regarding bid procedures and technical questions should be directed via email to Jacob Muller, Director of Purchasing, purchasing@ridgefieldct.gov.
11. **Bid Submissions:** The following items shall be submitted for a bid to be considered complete:
 - (a) Executed proposal on company letterhead
 - (b) Executed Hold Harmless Agreement
 - (c) Certificates of Insurance in conformance to Item 6 above
 - (d) Contractor's Qualification Statement

HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT

The undersigned covenants and agrees to and shall at all times indemnify, protect and save harmless the Town of Ridgefield from and against all costs or expenses resulting from any and all losses, damages, detriments, claims, demands, cost and charges including attorneys fees the Town of Ridgefield may directly or indirectly suffer, sustain or be subjected to by reason or on account of the work to be performed pursuant to this Contract or any activities in connection with said Contract whether such losses and damages be suffered or sustained by the Town of Ridgefield directly or by its employees, licenses or invitees or be suffered or sustained by other persons or corporations who may seek to hold the Town of Ridgefield liable therefore.

The Contractor shall comply with the Provisions of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 effective and enforceable as of June 6, 1987 which Act makes unlawful the hiring for employment or subcontracting individuals failing to provide documentation of legal eligibility to work in the United States. The Contractor shall hold the Town of Ridgefield harmless for the failure of the Contractor to comply with the provisions of said Act.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have set their hand and seal this on the _____ day of _____

Signed, Sealed and Delivered in the
Presence of:

Signed:

Notary Public

Purchasing Department, Town of Ridgefield, 400 Main Street, Ridgefield, CT 06877
203-431-2720 & purchasing@ridgefieldct.org

APPENDIX - INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

Each bidder shall carry and maintain the following insurance coverage during the period of the contract: The Certificate of Insurance for the Limits of Liability stated below should be submitted with your bid to the Purchasing Department at Town Hall. **Bidders may not perform any work until all insurance requirements are met.**

1. **Comprehensive General Liability Insurance** as will protect him, the Town, and any subcontractor performing work covered by this Contract, from claims for damages for personal injury, including accidental or wrongful death, as well as claims for property damages, which may arise from operations under this Contract whether such operations be by himself or by any subcontractor or by anyone directly or indirectly employed by either of them. Liability insurance shall include premises and operations, products, contractual, owners, and contractors protective. The minimum amounts of such insurance shall be as follows:
 - Bodily Injury Liability and Property Damage Liability:
\$1,000,000 each occurrence.
 - **The Town shall be named as an Additional Insured**
This **MUST** be stated explicitly on the Certificate or you will be **disqualified**
2. **Worker's Compensation Insurance and Employer's Liability** for all of his employees, employed at the site and in case any work is sublet, the Contractor shall require the subcontractor similarly to provide Workmen's Compensation Insurance for all employees of the later unless such employees are covered by the protection afforded by the Contractor.
 - Worker's Compensation and Employer Liability:
Statutory Limits
3. **Comprehensive Auto Liability Insurance:**
 - **Bodily Injury Insurance and Property Damage Insurance** covering the operation of all Motor Vehicles owned, hired and/or non-owned by the Contractor, or used by the Contractor in the Prosecution of the work under the Contract, shall be in the minimum of **\$1,000,000 each occurrence.**

All policies relating to this Contract shall be so written so that the Town shall be notified of cancellation or change at least thirty (30) days prior to the effective date for each policy and type of coverage except for nonpayment which shall be ten (10) days prior to the cancellation. Renewal certificate covering the renewal of all policies expiring during the life of the Contract shall be filed with the Town not less than ten (10) days before the expiration of such policies. Failure to do so will result in work stoppage and possible contract cancellation.