



WiredWest Communications Cooperative Corporation

Request for Information

The WiredWest Communications Cooperative Corporation (“WiredWest”) hereby requests information for RFI #1-2016 Operation and Maintenance Services for a Regional Fiber Optic Network to be provided in accordance with the terms, conditions and specifications established herein.

Sealed information packets will be received in the Old Courthouse, 99 Main Street, Northampton, MA 01060 until 4:00 PM EDT on September 30, 2016.

Information received after the date and time set for opening information will not be considered and will be returned unopened to the Submitter. It is the sole responsibility of the Submitter to assure that his/her information is received by WiredWest before the date and time set for opening the Request for Information (RFI).

Information must be sealed in an envelope and the envelope prominently marked:

**RFI #1 2016 Operation and Maintenance Services
For a Regional Fiber Optic Network
Request for Information**

If mailed, the envelope must be addressed to:

**WiredWest
c/o Jim Drawe – Chairman
Old Courthouse
99 Main Street
Northampton, MA 01060**

Additional copies of this Request for Information are available on the WiredWest website, WiredWest.net.

Information, once submitted, may not be withdrawn for a period of 60 calendar days.

The Submitter must provide one (1) master (hardcopy), one (1) electronic version in PDF format on a flash drive or CD and six (6) duplicates (hardcopies) of their submission for evaluation purposes.

WiredWest reserves the right to reject any or all submittals, and to waive technicalities and informalities when such waiver is determined by WiredWest to be in its best interest.

WiredWest will make no award as a result of this RFI but may issue a more comprehensive RFI or a Request for Proposal (RFP) at a future date.

Entities that do not respond to this RFI will not be disqualified from consideration as candidates for WiredWest Fiber Network Operations.

Information that the Submitter requires WiredWest to handle as confidential must be labeled as "Confidential" in the Submitter's response.

WiredWest encourages the participation of minority and women-owned businesses.

Laws and Regulations

All applicable Commonwealth of Massachusetts laws, municipal ordinances and regulations of all authorities having jurisdiction over the operation of the network shall apply to the contract, and shall be deemed to be incorporated herein by reference.

Equal Employment Opportunity

The Entity agrees to provide equal opportunity in employment for all qualified persons, to prohibit discrimination in employment because of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, age, or sexual orientation and to promote equal employment through a positive, continuing program from itself and each of its subcontracting agents. This program of equal employment opportunity shall apply to every aspect of its employment policies and practices.

Questions regarding this RFI shall be addressed to:

WiredWest
c/o Jim Drawe, Chairman
jim@wiredwest.net

All questions and responses will be posted to the WiredWest website: <http://www.wiredwest.net>

Firm Submitting Information _____

Complete Address: _____

Contact Name: _____ Title: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Fax Number: _____

Email Address: _____

**Request for Information
for
Operation and Maintenance of a
Regional Fiber Optic Network
in
Western Massachusetts**

Background

WiredWest is a Municipal Light Plant Cooperative formed under Chapter 164 Section 47C of the Massachusetts General Laws. WiredWest was incorporated in 2011 and currently has 40 Western Massachusetts towns' Municipal Light Plants as members.

Each member town will own the GPON fiber-to-the-premise network within their borders, including the huts, OLTs, ONTs, Pole Licenses, and Fiber. Each town's hut will be linked to the neighboring town's hut with a ring.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has set aside \$40 million in state bond funds to help the towns pay for the design and construction of their network.

To date, 24 towns have passed the borrowing authorizations necessary to fund their portion of the cost of construction, with more towns expected to pass the necessary authorizations over the next several months.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, through the Massachusetts Broadband Institute, will act as the General Contractor for the design and construction of each town's network.

It is expected that pole surveys will commence this fall, followed by make ready work next year, and construction the following year.

Most of the towns participating in the project are too small to provide services at a reasonable cost to their residents and businesses and need to work together to spread the costs of operations across a larger subscriber base.

WiredWest will perform this consolidation of the customer base by providing all necessary services on a regional basis.

Purpose of this Operation and Maintenance of a Regional Fiber Optic Network RFI

The purpose of this request for information is to assist WiredWest in identifying private-sector business partners interested in providing operation and maintenance services to the member towns through WiredWest.

WiredWest has not yet decided on a process for selecting partner(s) who will provide services. WiredWest seeks responses from entities that can provide one or more of the following services to our member towns:

- Customer Service
- Billing
- Technical Support
- Line Maintenance
- Network Operations - Fiber
- VOIP
- Internet Access (ISP)
- IPTV
- Sales
- Marketing
- Accounting
- Legal Services
- Web site development and maintenance

All service contracts will be between the Entity and WiredWest and will be white labeled as WiredWest services to the customers.

Member Town Demographics

The number of premises in the member towns ranges from 112 in New Ashford to 1,728 in Becket. The average premise count is 633 and the total premise count for all towns is 23,434.

Western Massachusetts is very rural, hilly, and forested. To reach all of the potential customers the network could consist of 1,781 miles of fiber for an average of 13 premises per mile. Most of the towns will be implementing a fiber to the home solution, while a four or five with unique topography or very low premise counts will be implementing a hybrid fiber/fixed wireless or pure fixed wireless solution.

The education levels and income levels of the citizens of these rural towns is above the state average and above the national average. The current internet service for these towns is limited Verizon DSL service that Verizon is phasing out, Satellite service, dial up, and very limited 3G cell service. Based on the experience in the neighboring small town of Leverett we are anticipating

a take rate in the high 70's or low 80's. Forty percent of our potential customers in our member towns have already pre-subscribed for services by making a \$49 deposit to WiredWest.

At this time we do not know how many towns will participate in the project. We do know that 24 towns have passed the required borrowing authorizations to pay for the construction.

WiredWest Member Town Maps

A list of potential towns participating in the project and a map of the towns can be seen on the WiredWest website <http://www.wiredwest.net>.

Information required to respond to the RFI and Response Procedure

Interested parties may respond by providing the information listed below:

- 1) General overview of your company / organization
- 2) Experience in providing the service or services that you are interested in providing to WiredWest
- 3) Examples of entities that are using your services with contact information
- 4) Discussion of how your services would interface with services provided by other vendors
- 5) Pricing of your services on a per customer or per mile or other suitable unit of measurement for a customer base of 5,000, 10,000, 15,000, 20,000 and number of miles of fiber of 500, 1,000, 1,500, 2,000.

As mentioned on page 2, information the Submitter requires WiredWest to handle as confidential must be labeled as "Confidential" in the Submitter's response.