

# Stafford County, Virginia

Request for Expression of  
Interest (“RFEI”) For  
**Broadband Services**

Proposal Submission Deadline:  
April 19, 2017

**Mail or Hand Deliver RFEI Documents To:**

Anita Perrow, Purchasing Manager  
Purchasing Office  
Stafford County  
1300 Courthouse Road  
P.O. Box 339  
Stafford, Virginia 22555-0339

Note: This is not a request for proposal (“RFP”)

**Board of Supervisors**

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Thomas C. Foley  
County Administrator

March 21, 2017

## REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

RFEI #425173

Request for Expression of Interest (RFEI #425173), for Contractors interested in partnering with the County to offer Broadband Services within Stafford County will be accepted until 3:00 P.M., Tuesday, April 25, 2017.

Questions must be received no later than, 4:30 P.M., Wednesday, April 13, 2017. If a determination is made that a clarification or change to the RFEI document is required, a written addendum will be posted on the appropriate sections of the websites of the Issuers. Respondents are responsible for obtaining all RFEI updates.

There is no preferred RFEI response format. Responses must be delivered at the following address or via e-mail as Microsoft Word Documents or PDF attachments no later than 3:00 PM, Wednesday, April 25, 2017:

County of Stafford  
Purchasing Office  
P.O. Box 339  
1300 Courthouse Road  
Stafford, VA 22555-0339  
Attn: Anita Perrow  
aperrow@staffordcountyva.gov

Please be observant of all instructions and specifications. Should any questions arise concerning this Request for Quotes, contact the Purchasing Office at (540) 658-8611.

Stafford County reserves the right to accept or reject, in whole or part, any and all responses and to waive informalities.

Anita Perrow  
Purchasing Manager



## Table of Contents

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	4
2. RFEI TIMELINE .....	5
3. OBJECTIVES OF RFEI .....	6
4. REQUESTED INFORMATION.....	7
5. AREAS OF COOPERATION .....	8
6. TERMS, CONDITIONS, AND DISCLAIMERS FOR .....	9
ATTACHMENT A: COVER SHEET .....	10

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Stafford County (“the County”) is issuing this Request for Expression (RFEI) of Interest, to seek potential businesses interested in partnering with the County to offer broadband services to unserved and underserved portions of the County and to run fiber to County facilities not currently connected to the County’s fiber network.

The County recognizes the importance of access to high speed internet service as a vital service for its citizens and businesses.

County staff and the Stafford County Telecommunications Commission have been investigating options to provide broadband access to underserved and unserved residents and businesses.

While most the County residents do have access to one broadband provider, many rural residents, especially in the Western part of the County and along the Potomac River do not have access. Additionally, some residents within the service footprint of cable/Internet providers do not have access due to large setbacks from where their residence is with respect to the roadway where the service runs along.

The County issues this RFEI to gather ideas and interest from service providers of High Speed Internet/Broadband (“Broadband”) services for affordable, reliable high speed Internet access for residential, business, and government constituents throughout the County.

High speed Broadband service can include but not limited to the deployment of a fiber-to-the-home solution, fixed wireless solution, or some other type of last mile solution. Interested parties should provide information on how its services can meet the FCC’s broadband benchmark speeds of 25 megabits per second (Mbps) for downloads and 3 Mbps for uploads ([https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/DOC-331760A1.pdf](https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-331760A1.pdf)) or provide information as to how your advertised speeds can meet the broadband speed guide provided by the FCC (<https://www.fcc.gov/reports-research/guides/broadband-speed-guide>).

This RFEI is intended to outline the market opportunity and invite interested providers to submit their ideas for new or expanded service delivery in Stafford County. This process is one of many steps that the County is taking to help unserved and underserved areas throughout the County.

**Note:** The County welcomes responses to this RFEI from ALL interested or potentially interested parties. Since this is only to solicit preliminary interest and ideas, this RFEI should not be interpreted as an invitation for bids or request for proposals. For the purposes of this RFEI, the terms “respondent”, “providers”, “vendor” mean an entity or entities submitting a written response to this RFEI.

2. RFEI TIMELINE

A. Important Dates

Publish RFEI	March 21, 2017
Deadline for Questions	April 13, 2017
Responses Due by 3:00 pm	April 25, 2017
Review of responses completed by County	May 19, 2017

B. Contact for questions and information requests

All general communications regarding the RFEI or requests for additional information should be directed to:

Stafford County  
 Purchasing Office  
 1300 Courthouse Road  
 P.O. Box 339  
 Stafford, Virginia 22555-0339  
 Attn: Anita Perrow  
 Email: [aperrow@staffordcountyva.gov](mailto:aperrow@staffordcountyva.gov)

C. Further Process

Stafford County will evaluate the information gathered through this RFEI process and make a determination on whether to proceed with a formal request for proposals (RFP) related to the deployment of high speed internet/broadband services.

An electronic copy may be downloaded from [www.staffordcountyva.gov](http://www.staffordcountyva.gov).

Access to County data for the identification of demand and assets is available by request. Any amendment or addendum to this RFEI is valid only if issued in writing by the Stafford County.

Any changes in the process or updates to the schedule above will be posted on the County website.

3. OBJECTIVES OF RFEI

Stafford County, Virginia, located midway between Washington, DC and Richmond, the capital of Virginia, along Interstate 95 is a vibrant and growing community. The County encompasses 277 square miles, is bounded by the Potomac River and King George County to the east, the Rappahannock river to the South, Fauquier County to the West, and Prince William County to the North. While some of the County remains rural, portions of the County have developed rapidly in recent years taking on a more suburban character. For decades, because of its proximity to Washington, DC, Stafford County saw

many of its workers commute to jobs inside the Washington beltway. That outmigration is changing rapidly as local jobs have grown more than 42% in the past decade, with more than 40,000 local jobs in the County today and an unemployment rate of 4%. As of the 2014 Census, the County’s population was estimated to be over 135,000, an increase of 8.5% from the 2010 Census, making Stafford one of the fastest growing counties in Virginia and the United States. 2015 Household income was \$95,666 and ranks 22nd nationally.

Stafford County is home to the Marine Corps Base Quantico, the national training ground for Marine Corps Officers, the FBI Academy and National Crime Lab, Drug Enforcement Agency Training and now consolidated DOD investigative Agencies. In all the federally diverse Quantico Marine Corps Base employees nearly 25,000 and has a regional economic impact of \$5 billion annually. Stafford is also a community with a rapidly growing high tech, industrial presence, with nearly 2,500 companies pricing goods and services to a diverse market. Major employers within the County include Geico Insurance, FBI, Intuit, MITRE, Greencore, and Northrup Grumman.

Housing Data

Housing units	45,100
Renter-occupied housing units	10,000
Average value of housing unit with mortgage/without mort.	\$312,887/\$310,216
Households 2016	42,800
Persons per household	3.02
Median age of occupants	35.3

All of these factors contribute to Stafford County’s RFEI for a broadband Internet solution that will serve residents, business and governments throughout the County. While a significant portion of the County does have Internet access , there are several thousand households that are unserved or underserved. Stafford County wishes to obtain access to high quality Internet access at the benchmark speed by the FCC (see <https://www.fcc.gov/document/fcc-finds-us-broadband-deployment-not-keeping-pace>) for its citizens and to encourage economic development.

The County is relying on the private sector and seeking last mile internet service providers to provide Internet to connect and serve the underserved or unserved rural areas of the County. A County-wide solution is optimal; however, it is understood that certain areas could potentially be chosen as a pilot for providers that do not have an existing footprint in the County. Incumbent providers are strongly encouraged to provide information as to proposed or future deployment in the identified unserved and underserved areas of the County.

The County believes that increased deployment of affordable broadband services is key to fostering innovation, to drive job creation, and to stimulate economic growth. Respondents to this RFEI should provide options or recommendations to provide service to unserved or underserved areas.

The County is open to considering a variety of methods to reach unserved and underserved residents and businesses. Fixed wireless broadband, fiber to the home, satellite and other options are methods that the County encourages providers to consider.

The County also wishes to connect 26 facilities scattered throughout the County, including fire stations, recreation facilities, and water utility facilities. Currently these sites are served by cable modems and the County wishes to connect these to the County's and Schools' fiber network. The connection distance varies from 0.5 miles to 4.8 miles, totaling 35.0 miles. The County will also consider fixed wireless broadband for these facilities as well.

#### 4. REQUESTED INFORMATION

##### 4.1. Cover Sheet (Attachment A)

- 4.1.1. Provide the full legal name of the Provider. Provide specific information concerning the agency, including: the agency's legal name and type of entity. If multiple providers are partnering, please include a separate coversheet for each provider with an explanation of primary role.
- 4.1.2. The cover sheet must be signed by an owner, corporate officer, or agent authorized by the Provider.
- 4.1.3. The names of all principals of the Provider must be disclosed on the cover sheet; specifically, all persons who have an equity interest in the Provider organization and/or hold a senior leadership position in the Provider organization.

##### 4.2. Previous Experience

- 4.2.1. Identify firm's previous experience in providing Internet services and broadband content in other markets
- 4.2.2. Identify customer segments served
- 4.2.3. Identify services and content offered, including pricing and contract terms
- 4.2.4. Customer service capabilities and technical Support practices, including service standards
- 4.2.5. Identify three references (names and contact information) who are familiar with your previous experience as a service provider

##### 4.3. Preliminary proposal for Internet service and broadband content you would offer in the Stafford County market

- 4.3.1. Provide a detailed preliminary description of Internet service and broadband content provider would propose to offer in the Stafford County market
- 4.3.2. What customer segments would you serve?
- 4.3.3. What services and content would you offer to various customer segments, including pricing and contract terms?
- 4.3.4. What Customer Service and Technical Support would you offer?

- 4.3.4.1. How and where would you staff this?
- 4.3.4.2. What customer service standards and service level agreements (SLAs) would you provide?

4.4. Preliminary proposal for fiber extension to 26 County facilities including fire stations, recreation facilities and utilities.

- 4.41 Provide a detailed preliminary description of how vendor would deploy point to point fiber and/or fixed wireless broadband to connect County facilities
- 4.4.2 What pricing structure would be offered?
- 4.4.3 Provide SLAs Offered.

## 5. AREAS OF COOPERATION

To the extent not covered in previous responses, this section highlights ways that the County could cooperate with respondents to improve the business case for proposed solutions. We encourage respondents to be creative and suggest other types of partnerships or business opportunities of interest

Specifically, this section could include:

A. Resources and facilities: Explanation of need for access to community assets and resources. Respondents should also address the relative importance and impact of variations in terms or more flexibility with respect to accessing the following types of community assets, facilities, and policies:

- 1. County water towers
- 2. County-owned radio towers
- 3. Three Milestone-owned monopoles (Landfill, Mountain View, Duff McDuff Park), which the County has rights to attach equipment
- 4. County controlled rights of way

B. Regulatory environment: Description of any rules or regulations at the federal, state or local level that could impact the feasibility or underlying economics associated with the proposed solutions. Responses should also include an explanation of any forms of proposed regulatory relief, including streamlined permitting, which could improve the economic case for the business models or network solutions proposed or for other network solutions that respondents considered but dismissed due to existing regulations and their effect on economic viability of such proposal.

C. Contracting issues: Explanation of any material considerations or expectations that respondents have with respect to any of the following issues likely to be negotiated during any future Requests for Proposal:

- 1. Intellectual property
- 2. Insurance
- 3. Indemnities
- 4. Warranties
- 5. Dispute resolution

6. Problems with current providers, if any
7. Other contracting issues not specifically listed above

D. Other partnership or revenue opportunities: Discussion of any other types of partnerships or working relationships between respondents and Supporters which could improve the business case for respondents to partner with one or more supporters.

## 6. TERMS, CONDITIONS AND DISCLAIMERS FOR RFEI

Responses to this RFEI become the exclusive property of the County. All documents submitted in response to this RFEI may be regarded as public records according to the Commonwealth of Virginia Public Records Act and may be subject to disclosure, in accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. Any material submitted that the respondent wishes to keep confidential should be clearly marked confidential on each page. The entire submission cannot be considered confidential. This RFEI is issued solely for information and planning purposes and does not constitute a solicitation. No material submitted in response to this RFEI will be returned. Respondents are solely responsible for all expenses associated with responding to this RFEI.

### Incurred Costs

The County will not be liable in any way for any costs incurred by respondents in replying to this RFEI, including, but not limited to, costs associated with preparing the response or participating in any site visits, demonstrations, conferences or oral presentations.

Should the County issue an RFP in the future, a Bidder or Offeror must be organized or authorized to transact business in the Commonwealth pursuant to Title 13.1 or Title 50 of the Code of Virginia, and shall include in its Bid or Proposal the identification number issued to it by the State Corporation Commission. Any Bidder or Offeror that is not required to be authorized to transact business in the Commonwealth as a foreign business entity under Title 13.1 or Title 50 of the Code of Virginia or as otherwise required by law shall include in its Bid or Proposal a statement describing why the Bidder or Offeror is not required to be so authorized. Any Bidder or Offeror described herein that fails to provide the required information shall not receive an award unless a waiver of this requirement and the administrative policies and procedures established to implement this section is granted by the County Administrator ([https://cisiweb.scc.virginia.gov/z\\_container.aspx](https://cisiweb.scc.virginia.gov/z_container.aspx)).

ATTACHMENT A: COVER SHEET

Name of Person, Business or Organization:	
Type of Entity: (e.g. Sole-Proprietorship, Partnership, Corp., Non-Profit, Public Agency)	
Federal Tax ID Number:	
Contact Person – Name	
Contact Person – Address	
Contact Person – Phone Number (s)	
Contact Person – e-mail address	

By signing this Cover Sheet I hereby attest: that I have read and understood all the terms listed in the RFEI and I have read and understood all terms listed in this request.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Authorized Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Authorized Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Title of Authorized Representative