

November 1, 2020



## **Release of RFP for Improvement of Broadband Services in Alstead, NH**

Dear Telecom Provider:

On behalf of the Town of Alstead Select Board, the members of the Alstead Broadband Committee, and the residents of the Town of Alstead, I appreciate your consideration for partnering with the Town on our goal of enhancing and improving broadband options for all unserved citizens of Alstead.

I have called out several key facts from within the proposal that may assist you in responding to our RFP:

- Approximately 37% of the premises in Town are unserved according to the FCC 25/3 definition of broadband.
- The Committee is aware of 1,204 distinct addresses in Alstead, NH.
- There are approximately 48 miles of Town-maintained roads and 15 miles of NH State-maintained roads within the Town of Alstead.
- All inquiries must be addressed to:  
Gordon Kemp, Chair  
Alstead Broadband Committee ([alsteadbroadbandchair@gmail.com](mailto:alsteadbroadbandchair@gmail.com))
- All complete proposals must be addressed to:  
Select Board  
PO Box 65  
Alstead, NH 03602
- The response date for this RFP is 11:00 AM EST, December 1, 2020.

We greatly appreciate your consideration and look forward to reviewing the submitted proposals.

Best regards,

Gordon Kemp  
Chair,  
Alstead Broadband Committee  
[AlsteadBroadbandChair@gmail.com](mailto:AlsteadBroadbandChair@gmail.com)

# **Request for Proposal**

## **Creating FCC Level Broadband Service**

### **Throughout the Town of Alstead, NH**

#### **November 1, 2020**

#### **1. DESCRIPTION**

The Town of Alstead is currently accepting proposals to improve broadband coverage to unserved locations as defined by NH-RSA 38:38, I(c). An unserved location is defined as a location that does not have access to at least 25 Mbps download/3 Mbps upload speeds. The location does not need to be subscribing to this service, but the service must be available at the street location (State or Town Road).

The Town currently has incomplete broadband availability. Most residents are unhappy with their service as evidenced in our town-wide survey conducted September 10-October 13, 2020. The survey results are available here:

[Survey Results](#)

The Town is served by 2 primary providers and several smaller providers. Consolidated Communications, Inc. (CCI) and Comcast Cable (Comcast) are the primary providers with CCI covering almost every residence in Town as the incumbent telephone company, and Comcast having a smaller footprint. Other providers, such as WiValley, various satellite companies, and mobile wireless providers have various coverage but are utilized by less than 12% of residents. Approximately 37% of premises in the Town do not have access to 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload speeds (FCC spec). The following maps and spreadsheet show our best estimate of the coverage available compiled from the data received during the Request for Information phase of this project:

[Broadband Coverage By Premises Map.pdf](#)

[Broadband Coverage By Road Map.pdf](#)

[Broadband Coverage By Premises Spreadsheet](#)

There are approximately 48 miles of Town-maintained roads, 18 miles of Class VI roads not maintained by the Town, and 15 miles of NH State-maintained roads within the Town of Alstead.

## 2. BUSINESS MODEL: GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS OF TOWN

The Alstead Select Board is soliciting proposals to improve broadband coverage in the Town to specifically address the needs of the unserved population. The Select Board's desire is to form a partnership with one or more providers that address this goal. The Town does not want to be a broadband service provider, be responsible for operating a network, or be responsible for maintaining a network.

- A. Both wired and wireless technologies, as well as hybrid solutions, will be considered.
- B. The Town is willing to work with any and all providers with regards to siting equipment, e.g. poles, or distribution equipment, on Town rights of way.
- C. Providers may submit more than one Proposal in order to offer multiple feasible solutions or price points.
- D. Proposals are to include costs to provide service at the "street-level", meaning along all State and Town maintained roads. The cost of going from the street to the final location should be defined in the proposal, but that cost will be the responsibility of the winning bidder or the broadband customers themselves.
- E. The Town is not willing to fund construction in those areas the Town has deemed "served", meaning those areas already having 25/3 Mbps service available from other providers. However, providers are free to compete in those areas of Town with their own funding, and with the cooperation of the Town with regards to right-of-way access.
- F. The Town of Alstead is following the requirements of New Hampshire RSA 33 in order to pursue the option of issuing bonds to fund Broadband infrastructure upgrades to meet the 25/3 specification. As part of this process, there are requirements imposed by State law and the New Hampshire Municipal Bond Bank. The most significant requirement is that the Town must own the bonded assets until the Bond is paid off. After the Bond is paid off, the Town is open to either retaining ownership of the asset and continuing in a partnership with a vendor to operate and maintain the network, or negotiating a transfer of ownership to the vendor.
- G. Once proposals are received, the Select Board will review the proposals and either reject them all or recommend one or more for the voters' consideration. See Section 4 for a detailed Timeline.

### **3. PROPOSAL GUIDELINES**

All proposals must be submitted in a sealed envelope, plainly marked with “Broadband Project” by the response date of 11:00 AM EST, December 1, 2020.

**Address to: Select Board  
PO Box 65  
Alstead, NH 03602**

#### **Include within each proposal package:**

- A. A letter of transmittal with the name, signature, and title of the person authorized to commit the Bidder to the Proposal terms;
- B. Ten (10) hard copies of the proposal;
- C. One electronic version of the proposal as an attachment in .PDF format sent to AlsteadBroadbandChair@gmail.com

Contact Alstead Broadband Committee Chair Gordon Kemp by email (AlsteadBroadbandChair@gmail.com) with any questions about submitting the proposal.

#### **In addition to the above requirements, proposals must include:**

##### **For building the network:**

- A. Description of Technology and Project Design to be used and how it meets the requirements.
- B. A cost breakdown by area.
- C. Cost to install to the Street level for each specified unserved area of Town.
- D. Cost of installation from Street level to residence to be funded by provider or broadband customer. This can include a per foot charge.
- E. Proposals should show service to all unserved areas of the Town along State and Town maintained roads. Any potential problem areas that will require extensive engineering or high construction costs should be highlighted with cost savings achieved if left unserved.
- F. Proposals may show service to the entire Town, as long as the cost to the Town is clearly shown as being only to fund construction to serve unserved areas.
- G. Approximate timeline for installation. This should include estimates for tasks that may or may not be fully under the provider’s control, such as “make ready requirements” or easements.
- H. List of easements or approvals required from third parties.
- I. Credentials of Provider: Examples and references to other systems installed and managed.
- J. Any applicable insurance coverage.

**For operating the network:**

- K. Description of the service/maintenance operation of the provider. This would include estimates of service call response times and any related guarantees.
- L. Description of the Customer Service operation of the provider. This would include any call center locations and hours of service.
- M. An estimate of expected Up Time (properly working service) and how bills will be affected due to Down Time (service not working) whether at a system or home level.
- N. Proposals that include Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with guaranteed Quality of Service (QoS) metrics such as Throughput as a % of advertised service, Latency, Packet Loss, and Up Time, and which include real financial penalties to the Provider in the case of SLA violations, are preferred.
- O. Contract recommendations/requirements for the bidder to work with the Town.
- P. Any contract wording or provision that assures the Town does not suffer financial loss or loss of service should the bidding company be sold or go out of business during the term of the agreement. If no consideration is available, the bidding company's response should so state.
- Q. Customer pricing for monthly service for different performance specifications including rental of all equipment and any time commitment or time limit for such pricing.
- R. If data caps are to be part of the service, these must be specified in the Proposal. Any and all data caps must be high enough that an average family of four with parents working from home and students using remote learning would not exceed the cap.

**4. TIMELINE**

- A. This Request For Proposal is being issued on November 1, 2020.
- B. Bidders have until 11:00 AM EST, December 1, 2020, to respond.
- C. Sealed bids will be opened by the Alstead Select Board at their meeting held on Tuesday, December 1, 2020, at 6:30 PM.
- D. Proposals will be reviewed during December, with either a recommendation or rejection no later than January 1, 2021.
- E. If the Select Board decides to move forward with one or more Proposals, Public Hearings regarding the public benefit of the recommended proposal(s) are required. A Public Hearing is also required to discuss the issuing of bonds by the Town. These hearings must happen before Town Meeting. Final approval and acceptance of the proposal(s) must be done at Town Meeting where a Bonding Article will have to be accepted by the Town voters. Town Meeting is scheduled for the middle of March 2021.

## **5. PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA**

The Select Board will evaluate all proposals based on the following criteria. To ensure consideration for this Request for Proposal, your proposal should be complete and include all of the following criteria:

- A. Overall proposal suitability: proposed outlines must meet the scope and needs included herein and be presented in a clear and organized manner.
- B. Organizational Experience: Organizations will be evaluated on their experience as it pertains to the scope of this project.
- C. Previous work: Organizations will be evaluated on examples of their work as well as client testimonials and references.
- D. Value and cost: Organizations will be evaluated on the cost of their solution(s) based on the work to be performed in accordance with the scope of this project.
- E. Technical expertise and experience: Organizations must provide descriptions and documentation of staff technical expertise and experience.

## **6. TERMS OF THE RFP**

- A. All contractual terms and conditions will be subject to review by the Town of Alstead's Attorney and will include scope, budget, schedule, and other necessary items pertaining to the project.
- B. Town Discretion: The Select Board reserves the right to cancel this RFP at any time, to reject any and all proposals, to waive any defect or informality in the proposals received, and to accept the proposal deemed to be most favorable to the best interests of the Town, including, but not limited to, bidder qualifications, project cost, project size, schedule, and business model.
- C. No Costs: This solicitation does not obligate the Town, or any other person associated with the Project to pay any costs incurred by Bidders in preparing and submitting a proposal.
- D. No express or implied services: This solicitation does not obligate the Town, or any other person associated with the Project to accept or contract for any expressed or implied services.
- E. Bidder's duty to examine: Submission of a proposal shall be conclusive evidence that the Bidder has examined the Premises and the contract documents and is familiar with all the conditions of this procurement. Upon finding any omissions or discrepancies in the proposal documents, the Bidder shall notify the Select Board immediately so that any necessary addenda may be issued. Failure of the Bidder to completely investigate the Premises and/or to be thoroughly familiar with the contract documents (including plans, specifications, and all addenda) shall in no way relieve the Bidder from any obligation

with respect to the proposal. Bidder is responsible for verifying all statements in this RFP with the proper authorities.

- F. Incomplete Proposal: Proposals that are incomplete, contain any omissions, erasures, alterations, additions, or irregularities of any kind may be rejected, but the Town is not obligated to reject such proposals.
- G. Proposal Withdrawal or Modification: Any Bidder may withdraw or modify its Proposal by written request at any time prior to the Response Date (December 1, 2020). Telephonic proposals, amendments, or withdrawals will not be accepted. Unless otherwise specified, no proposal may be withdrawn for a period of sixty (60) days from the response date. The Select Board may waive minor informalities or allow the Bidder to correct them. The Select Board may permit a Bidder to withdraw a proposal if a mistake is evident on the face of the document, but the intended correct offer is not similarly evident. Negligence on the part of the Bidder in preparing the Proposal confers no rights for the withdrawal of the Proposal after it has been opened.
- H. Bidder Inquiries: All substantive inquiries from prospective Bidders concerning this RFP must be submitted via email with the subject line "Alstead Broadband" to the Alstead Broadband Committee Chair, Gordon Kemp ([alsteadbroadchair@gmail.com](mailto:alsteadbroadchair@gmail.com)) up to November 30, 2020, and will be shared with other prospective Bidders. All responses to substantive questions shall be via email and will be simultaneously distributed to all recipients of the RFP and made available to all interested parties.
- I. The Select Board is not obligated to select the lowest bid, the lowest responsible bid or follow any other criteria in selecting a successful bidder. The Select Board shall select the Proposal which in their view, after evaluation of the qualifications of the bidder and proposed design, business model, and schedule, is most advantageous to the Town.
- J. Final acceptance of the Bid requires the approval of the Select Board, and the approval of the Bond by Town voters at the annual Town Meeting to be held in March 2021.