

**Tri-County Broadband Enhancement Request for Information
Pershing, Humboldt and Lander Counties**

**Initial Vendor Questions
June 18, 2020**

1. Please confirm that the Evaluation Criteria for proposals submitted by respondents are the same for each county.

It is confirmed that the evaluation criteria is the same for each of the three Counties. The Broadband Action Committees in Humboldt, Lander and Pershing will evaluate proposals separately. However, the Counties plan to communicate with one another during the evaluation process.

2. Please advise whether respondents can submit proposals below the county level?

While the Broadband Action Committee's in each County would prefer that respondents propose to serve the entire County, proposals will be accepted covering only parts of the Counties.

In particular, for less dense areas of the Counties, the Broadband Enhancement RFIs included information on the upcoming FCC Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) reverse auctions, which contain census block groups in each county that are eligible for RDOF subsidy. If respondents are planning to participate in the RDOF auction process for Humboldt, Lander and/or Pershing County, the respondent should acknowledge that in the bid.

3. Please provide additional details/information relating to the type of assistance each county will provide respondents to help secure federal assistance.

Each County has expressed interest in the following types of support:

- **Access to County and Municipal Buildings and owned Land for placement of communications interconnect huts; wireless assets (towers); potential staging areas for equipment during the installation phase**
- **Access to existing County or municipal vertical assets (towers, water towers) for placement of wireless equipment**
- **Each County is facing budget shortfalls due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but each county has agreed to consider delays in collecting fees related to permits and rights of way access**
- **For RDOF, the Counties and municipalities have agreed to streamline permitting and ROW process to assist the respondent by supporting applications for and helping to interface with the Nevada Department of Transportation; the Bureau of Land Management and other permitting agencies**
- **For grant applications such as the US Department of Commerce Economic Development Authority (EDA) grants; the Community Development Block Grant (HUD) and USDA Community Connect or Reconnect Grants the County and/or Municipality will offer letters of support for grant applications.**

4. Please describe efforts/initiative by each county to secure funding at the state or local level.

The State of NV has no existing community broadband grant program. The State, through the Governor's Office of Science, Innovation and Technology (OSIT), had a special construction matching fund for E-rate special construction projects. This has been suspended due to budget cuts associated with the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The Counties and municipalities involved in the RFI process are currently not in the fiscal position, due to the COVID-19 pandemic budget pressures to offer direct grants to respondents.

5. Please provide a list of assets and their locations that are owned or controlled by each county that may be utilized by respondents when developing their proposals. What are terms and conditions associated with accessing those assets?

Links to asset maps and tables of assets were included in each RFI.

- a. Have the counties created a GIS Spatial Data inventory, in machine readable format, of relevant infrastructure to support broadband in the county boundaries?

The Counties and municipalities have not created a GIS Spatial Data Inventory but each county has interactive GIS maps accessible on-line:

Humboldt: (<https://www.hcnv.us/154/Maps>)

Lander:

(http://www.landercountynv.org/government/assessor/gis_interactive_map.php)

Pershing: <https://farrwestgis.com/portal/apps/sites/#/pershingconv>

- b. Does this list include Poles? **None of the public entities involved in the RFI own poles.**
 - c. Does this list include Antennas? (Cellular and Microwave) **None of the public entities involved in the Tri-County RFI own public access antennas.**
 - d. Does this list include existing Fiber Facilities and points of presence? **Points of presence along I-80 are owned either by the State of NV (Co ownership by the Nevada System of Higher Education; the Nevada Department of Transportation and the Nevada Enterprise Information Technology Services) or by private sector service providers.**
6. Are the counties making efforts to secure access to spectrum from spectrum owners that are not utilizing such spectrum? If yes, could you please provide details about the type of spectrum/frequency bands that may be available? **The Counties involved in the Tri-County RFI are not making efforts to secure spectrum for public use.**
 7. Will the spectrum be available for purchase or a long term lease? If lease, what is the maximum duration? **See above.**
 8. Please describe whether the counties will consider the following types of arrangements to increase long term success? Franchise, exclusivity, private public partnership, preference in sole-source procurement for county or affiliate partner contracts, county level endorsement and promotion. **The participants in the Tri-County Broadband Enhancement RFI process will entertain requests for support.**

Some specific examples:

- **Pershing County has included a detailed specification for County and City of Lovelock IT and connectivity needs in the Pershing County RFI and will consider specific bids to meet these needs**
- **The three county School Districts are in current contracts for connectivity.**
 - **Pershing County School District and the Pershing County Library are in a long-term contract for sites in Lovelock. A new fiber network was installed in 2019. The owner of the fiber network, WANRack may be interested in leasing dark fiber strands to respondents.**
 - **Humboldt County School District has a dark fiber agreement for the schools in Winnemucca. The School in McDermitt has recently received upgraded connectivity. The Schools in Orovada, Paradise Valley and Denio will be bidding service in 2021 in an E-rate compliant procurement.**
 - **In Lander County, the Lander County School District school in Austin is on a fiber based connection. The fiber was built in 2019. The Schools in Battle Mountain may bid connectivity in 2021. The Libraries in Austin and Battle Mountain will receive fiber based connections in the next few months, pending E-rate approval.**
- **Humboldt County Government; City of Winnemucca Government and Lander County Government will consider pricing for broadband service to the County and City facilities listed in the Tri-County RFI. These entities may have to participate in a formalized bid process in order to procure service.**

As mentioned previously, direct fiscal support from any local or County government included in the Tri-County RFI is unlikely due to the fiscal crisis related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

9. Please describe actions each county intends to take to streamline the Rights-of-way process for respondents. Please provide any terms and conditions for accessing those Rights-of-way. How long does the counties intend to waive any fees? What will the fees return to when they are no longer waived?

Counties and municipalities will consider three year waivers of franchise and right of way fees. Counties and municipalities will consider 30 day turnaround on permit applications. Respondents should request consideration they are seeking in their Broadband Enhancement RFI responses.

10. Please describe any agreement the counties have with the Nevada DOT for the purpose of expediting of trenching and easements?

The Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) controls most ROWs. There is no agreement with the State in place to facilitate access but the Counties involved in the Tri-County expertise all enjoy an excellent relationship with NDOT and can assist in facilitating communications.

11. Please describe the type of assistance each county will provide to expedite permitting process on Federal lands (Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service and Bureau of Indian Affairs).

The Counties involved in the Tri-County Broadband Enhancement RFI and the Nevada Governor's Office of Science Innovation and Technology have existing relationships with Federal permitting agencies.

The Counties and OSIT are willing to assist with introductions and to help explain to the permitting agencies the importance of the broadband enhancement projects requiring permits.

12. Will each county make available coverage maps in an electronic format (shape files) for respondent's use?
13. Will each county make available electronic maps that identify high density and low density areas?

The links to the County GIS maps were included in an earlier link.

Humboldt County, the link contains assessor plot maps and a [legend](#) for reference to the plot maps.

Lander County, the link contains a detailed zoning map.

Pershing County, the link contains an interactive [Assessor's map](#).

14. Have the counties identified any site development restrictions i.e. tower height that could be eased to allow for more efficient and cost effective construction? Would the counties consider granting respondents waivers and exemptions from such requirements?

If existing County or municipal ordinances are inconsistent with the deployment of enhanced broadband service, County and municipal governments involved in the Tri-County Broadband Enhancement RFI would consider amendments.

15. The RFIs identify incentives that are limited to Fiber-To-The-Premise (FTTP) vendors. Is the limitation statutory? If not what is the reasoning for such a limitation? Are the proposed incentives for fiber deployments federal, state or local?

The incentives around land use; asset access; permitting; ROW assistance are not limited to FTTP deployments only.

16. The RFIs identify numerous Service Level Agreements (SLAs). How were the SLAs determined? If the SLAs are not achievable what is the implication? Is following the federal SLA Guidelines for telecommunications acceptable?

The SLA's are general guidelines. Respondents who will differ from the SLAs need to outline the differences in their proposals.