



Town of Fairhaven, Massachusetts
Request for Proposal
Last Mile Broadband Feasibility Study

Table of Contents

LEGAL NOTICE.....	2
RFP Schedule	3
Background.....	3
Introduction.....	4
RFP Scope	4
RFP Requirements	5
1. Demand for broadband Service - RFP respondent will develop an approach for estimating the demand for affordable, accessible, and reliable broadband service in the Town of Fairhaven.	5
2. Education/community engagement plan.....	5
3. Engineering design options - RFP respondent will develop a pre-engineering last mile broadband network design that leverages Fairhaven’s municipal fiber network.	5
4. Last mile broadband model option(s) recommendation - RFP respondent will recommend last mile broadband model option(s) for Fairhaven to review	6
5. Capital funding options - RFP respondent will identify potential capital funding options	7
6. Respondent qualifications – RFP respondent will provide the following information	7
Method for Award.....	7
Cost Proposal.....	7

LEGAL NOTICE

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (“RFP”)

Last Mile Broadband Feasibility Study

The town of Fairhaven is interested in engaging a qualified Engineering and/or Broadband Consulting firm to develop a detailed, actionable broadband feasibility study. The selected firm shall have demonstrated previous experience in developing broadband feasibility studies and assisting with the implementation of the plan. A complete RFP may be obtained, without charge, by contacting the Town Administrator’s Office at 508-979-4023, or email mrees@fairhaven-ma.gov. It is recommended that respondents to this request familiarize themselves with the detailed RFP. The deadline for submitting proposals to the Town Administrator’s Office is 2:00 PM Eastern Time, November 1, 2019. Proposers must submit nine (9) copies of their proposal and one digital copy. The Town reserves the right to reject any proposal deemed not to be in its best interest and waive minor technicalities. The Town reserves the right to schedule interviews with any or all respondents. Postmarks, faxes, and email proposals will not be considered.

RFP Schedule

- RFP issue date: October 8, 2019
- RFP question and answer window: October 8 – 18, 2019*
- RFP Responses due: November 1, 2019, 2:00 PM
- RFP award announcement: December 4, 2019

*Questions related to the content of the RFP can be submitted by email to dfrates@fairhaven-ma.gov. The deadline for submitting questions is October 16, 5:00 PM Eastern Time. Answers to questions submitted by this date/time will be posted on the Town's website: <https://www.fairhaven-ma.gov/broadband-study-committee>. Responses will not be provided to questions submitted after the deadline.

Background

[Fairhaven](#) is a town with a population of approximately 16,000, 6,800 households, a population density of 1,296 residents per square mile of area and is located in Bristol County on the south coast of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. It has a land area of 12 square miles, 29.4 miles of shore line and approximately 100 miles of roadways. It is approximately 50 miles south of Boston, Massachusetts and 35 miles east of Providence, Rhode Island.

The Town was settled in 1650 and was officially incorporated in 1812. It is governed by a three-member board of Selectmen, a Town Administrator and Representative Town Meeting form of government.

The town recognizes that there is a critical need for an affordable, accessible and reliable last mile fiber optic infrastructure or broadband infrastructure to support its future economic development and the quality of life of its citizens. In December 2018, Fairhaven formed an Ad Hoc Municipal Fiber Study Committee. One of the Committee's primary responsibilities is to "study the feasibility, benefits and costs of a municipally owned and operated town wide fiber optic system that would deliver electronic content to residents and businesses in a manner that both enhances services and controls cost."

This Request for Proposal (RFP) is to invite qualified vendors (respondents) with expertise in developing broadband feasibility studies, fiber technology or other broadband infrastructure and last mile broadband network design and engineering, and analyzing municipal fiber network models to submit proposals to develop an actionable broadband feasibility study for the Town of Fairhaven.

The purpose of the feasibility study is to help the Town understand Fairhaven's last mile broadband infrastructure options. The physical scope of the feasibility study is limited to the Fairhaven town limits. The study requires an assessment of the current state of broadband infrastructure and services, development of a community engagement/education plan, a high-level broadband engineering design, and recommendations for the broadband model options that Fairhaven needs to consider. The primary deliverable that Fairhaven is expecting from the feasibility study is an

actionable plan that will guide its next steps in deploying an affordable, accessible, and reliable broadband infrastructure.

Introduction

Notice of this RFP is published in the Central Register & Goods and Services Bulletin (which is a weekly publication of the Office of the Secretary of State), The Standard Times (a newspaper of general circulation) and posted on the Town website (www.fairhaven-ma.gov) under “Documents and Contracts”.

The Town will accept proposals delivered in person or by mail. All proposals must be received by 2:00 PM Eastern Time, November 1, 2019. Proposals submitted by fax or by electronic mail will not be considered. All proposals must be submitted to:

Mr. Mark H. Rees, Town Administrator
Fairhaven Town Hall
40 Center Street
Fairhaven, MA 02719

RFP Scope

The Fairhaven Broadband Feasibility Study will provide an approach for determining the current level of demand for affordable, accessible, and reliable broadband service in the Town. It will provide an education/community engagement plan that the Town can use to inform residents and businesses about the future benefits of a robust broadband infrastructure.

The Feasibility Study will provide a pre-engineering or high-level design for both an active Ethernet and passive optical design (PON) of the Town’s last mile broadband infrastructure.

The Feasibility Study will provide recommendations for the model option(s) the Town should consider for the delivery of affordable, accessible, reliable broadband services. For each model option recommendation, provide an analysis of its financial risk to the Town and the level of control that it affords the Town. Each model option recommendation will include an operation and maintenance plan, a marketing plan, a governance plan and an implementation plan. A pro-forma analysis is required for each model option recommendation.

The Feasibility Study will provide an analysis of possible capital funding options that the Town should consider.

Qualifications for responding to the RFP include a vendor’s financial summary, broadband feasibility studies and related broadband experience with references, and the identification of partners and subcontractors that will be participating in the project.

RFP Requirements

1. Demand for broadband Service - RFP respondent will develop an approach for estimating the demand for affordable, accessible, and reliable broadband service in the Town of Fairhaven.

The respondent will develop an approach for estimating the current state of broadband in the town. The approach will include:

- An assessment of actual broadband speeds (download/upload) speeds and ping provided by incumbent providers.
- An approach for determining the level of satisfaction with existing broadband services internet service.
- An approach for determining the estimated demand for services from an additional service provider(s)
 - Lower cost
 - Improved reliability
 - Higher speeds/symmetrical service
 - Improved customer service
 - Residential and business customers

Maximum requirement weight: 15 points

2. Education/community engagement plan

The respondent will develop education/community engagement plan including the supporting materials that can be used to educate and engage town residents and businesses about the future benefits of broadband across various sectors – healthcare, education, economic development, public safety, government services.

Educational/community engagement materials will be suitable for presenting at Town Hall meetings and other public information sessions.

An educational/community engagement process that reinforces the future benefits of broadband that focuses on using social media and the Town’s website is required.

The plan will include a recommended approach for community engagement including using various communication channels, i.e., in-person meetings, social media.

The respondent will include an option for supporting the Town’s implementation of the education/community engagement plan including, if requested, facilitating Town Hall or public information sessions.

Maximum requirement weight: 10 points

3. Engineering design options - RFP respondent will develop a pre-engineering last mile broadband network design that leverages Fairhaven’s municipal fiber network.

The respondent will develop a pre-engineering last mile broadband infrastructure network design. The pre-engineering deliverable is a high-level design with the goal of understanding the overall capital cost of constructing the last mile broadband infrastructure network. A detailed engineering

design is not required, but the RFP respondent will provide an estimate of what it would cost to go from the result of high-level engineering design to a detailed engineering study.

Fairhaven has a municipal fiber network that serves the Town's school and municipal sites. Information about the design of this network is available at <https://www.fairhaven-ma.gov/broadband-study-committee>.

Fairhaven is interested in the pre-engineering design capital cost of both a passive optic network (PON) and an active ethernet network.

The respondent is requested to address how the last mile broadband infrastructure network design will support wireless technology such as small cell technology that will be required to support 4G LTE densification and 5G technology.

Maximum requirement weight: 20 points

4. Last mile broadband model option(s) recommendation - RFP respondent will recommend last mile broadband model option(s) for Fairhaven to review

The respondent will develop last mile broadband model option(s) recommendations for the Town of Fairhaven to consider. Each model option recommended will include a control/financial risk analysis based on the following definitions:

- Control – network ownership including decisions on how it is operated
- Financial risk – investment associated with developing and running the network balanced against revenue generated.
- Sustainability to support emerging technologies.

Models that minimize the Town's financial risk are of the most interest, but the Broadband Study Committee is open considering models with a balance between control and financial risk. The Broadband Study Community was chartered to study the feasibility of a municipal last mile broadband infrastructure network, but it is open to reviewing franchising model and coop option proposals.

For each last mile broadband model recommendation, the respondent will include a five-year pro-forma analysis that includes:

- Operational cost
 - Marketing
 - Customer service
 - Billing
- Maintenance cost
 - Infrastructure maintenance
 - Electronics refresh
- Debt service cost
- Revenue projections
 - Take-rate
 - Pricing
 - Types of services offered (Internet, cable TV, phone)

The pro-forma analysis will be provided in a format (Microsoft Excel preferred) that permits varying assumptions such as take rate estimates, pricing options, operations and maintenance cost.

Models that recommend Fairhaven own and/or operate the network will include these plans:

1. Marketing plan
2. Operations plan
3. Maintenance plan
4. Municipal governance plan
5. Implementation plan

Maximum requirement weight: 25 points

5. **Capital funding options - RFP respondent will identify potential capital funding options**
RFP respondent will identify potential capital funding options that may be available to the Town of Fairhaven. Examples:

- Federal or state government grants or low interest loans
- Public Private Partnerships (PPP)
- Co-op options
- Municipal bond options
- Tax options

Maximum requirement weight: 10 points

6. **Respondent qualifications – RFP respondent will provide the following information**

- High-level project plan and schedule for delivery of the feasibility study.
- Overview description of the vendor leading the feasibility study including a 3-year financial summary.
- Summary of experience performing broadband feasibility studies or similar broadband projects completed in the past three years.
- References/contact information for broadband feasibility studies or similar broadband projects completed in the past three years.
- Professional credentials of partner/contractor firms that will be working under the lead vendor.
- Resumes of key individuals that will be working on the project - project managers, analyst, engineers, attorneys.

Maximum requirement weight: 20 points

Method for Award

The contract will be awarded to the most qualified and responsive vendor that submits the most advantageous proposal taking into consideration all the requirements as well as cost.

Cost Proposal

RFP respondent will provide a not-to-exceed amount for each requirement. Changes to the scope and/or requirements listed in the RFP must be submitted as a written change request and approved

by the Town of Fairhaven. If the Town changes the scope and/or requirements listed in the RFP, it will submit a written change request to the vendor for approval.

Requirement #	Cost
1. Demand for broadband Service	
2. Education/community engagement plan	
3. Engineering design options	
4. Last mile broadband model option(s) recommendation	
5. Capital funding options	
6. Respondent qualifications	
Total Cost	