

Request for Proposals Cullowhee Valley Broadband Access Project

A. Background and Statement of Need

Cullowhee Valley (CV) is a section of Jackson County in Western North Carolina surrounding Western Carolina University (WCU). Western Carolina University (operating as Western Carolina Power) serves as the electric service provider for approximate 3,350+ customers in the area. Customer base is primarily residential with approximately 230 commercial and university accounts.

History of Western Carolina Power (WCP):

- x Started providing electricity to campus circa 1918, when electricity was produced in conjunction with an old flour milling operation, the Cullowhee Milling Company, on the Tuckasegee River. It produced about 25KW output capacity.
- x In 1925, took over all interest in Cullowhee Milling Company.
- x In 1928, due to the old log dam continuously washing out, discussions were held whether to build a new concrete dam and plant or purchase electricity (from Harris Clay Co of Dillsboro or Cox and Sons of Cullowhee). It was decided to build new and the power

residents for their education endeavors (K-12 children, college students who live in apartments near WCU, faculty teaching electronically from their home) and for accessing and using the digital/electronic resources and services that everyone is increasingly dependent upon. These needs are irrespective of whether you reside in an urban or more rural setting. In recent years, it has become evident that access to adequate internet speeds has become a major element in the decision-making process for faculty, staff, students, business developers, entrepreneurs, retirees, and others in search of a home or business location.

WCU Executive leadership and officials realize that additional and increased access to broadband services will provide benefits and opportunities for economic development, improvement in local services, education enhancements, access to tele-healthcare and telework and increased services to senior citizens and disabled persons. In a recent 2015 Jackson county-wide resident survey, the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, the Cullowhee Valley is a growing community; currently the fastest growing area in Jackson County. Per the latest census data, the Cullowhee area population grew over 36% from 2000 to 2010. The University continues to expand and grow, with record enrollments recorded in 5 of the last 6 years.

from interested

C. Scope of Work

Required:

D. Selection Procedures

- x Include an executive summary (not to exceed two pages) that describes the project and funding that is being proposed.
- x Describe any enhanced features and network functionality that may add value to the high-speed internet / broadband network being provided.
- x If desired, bidder may describe any business or teaming relationships with other providers that might positively affect the capability / services provided by the proposed high-speed internet / broadband network.
- x & R P P H Q W R Q K R Z \ R X U F R P S D Q S W V H O H F W L R Q P L J K W
 Provide a positive indirect input to the local community beyond the actual advantages resulting from the network.

G. Proposal Submission

Questions concerning this RFP must be submitted in writing by email prior to 5:00 pm on February 9, 2018 to Joe Walker at jwalker@wcu.edu.

One electronic copy of the proposal and all relevant materials must be received by 5:00 PM on March 9, 2018. Faxes are not acceptable. The electronic copy should be submitted by e-mail to jwalker@wcu.edu.

When submitting materials by e-mail, you must have a reply from Joe Walker acknowledging receipt of materials.

Appendix A --- Maps of WCP distribution network

These maps are also attached in electronic format.



