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## RFI Number 3833 Memorandum

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**To:** Vendors Interested in Responding to Request for Information (RFI) Number 3833 for the Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services (ITS)

**From:** Craig P. Orgeron, Ph.D. *cm*

**CC:** ITS Project File Number 42321

**Date:** September 29, 2015

**Subject:** Request for Information for Vendor Broadband Expansion for the Mississippi Coastal Region

**Contact Name:** Cerria Walker

**Contact Phone Number:** 601-432-8013

**Contact E-mail Address:** Cerria.Walker@its.ms.gov

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This Request for Information is being issued by the State of Mississippi in preparation for the build-out and deployment of broadband infrastructure across the Mississippi Coastal Region (Hancock, Harrison, and Jackson Counties), as part of an effort to promote economic development through the use of world-class, ultra-high speed broadband infrastructure and internet access. The goal is to create cost-effective ultra-high speed broadband infrastructure and internet access targeted at commercial and industrial corridors, as well as households, to foster innovation, drive job creation, and stimulate economic growth.

The purpose of this RFI is the identification of broadband infrastructure solutions capable of achieving accessible and cost-effective ultra-high speed internet access traversing the Mississippi Coastal Region. The State of Mississippi is seeking information from qualified vendors with knowledge of existing broadband services within the Mississippi Coastal Region on how best to expand and/or enhance infrastructure for the delivery of ultra-high speed internet access.

The State of Mississippi has recommended \$15 million of the State's RESTORE Act Direct Component allocation from the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Transocean Settlement to improve broadband infrastructure within the Mississippi Coastal Region. Direct Component funding is administered by the U.S. Department of the Treasury. Availability of Direct Component funding is contingent upon project approval by the U.S. Department of the Treasury. This infrastructure will be owned by a public entity, such as the State of Mississippi, or a non-profit organization and made available through long-term lease agreements with providers.

The State is interested in receiving vendor information that identifies areas where cost-effective access to ultra-high speed broadband infrastructure and internet access is limited or unavailable. In addition, the State is interested in ways to remove barriers that prevent the

Mississippi Coastal Region from taking advantage of the benefits of ultra-high speed broadband infrastructure and internet access. The information gained will be used to identify the best design, construction, and deployment of broadband infrastructure based on consumer needs to promote economic growth.

## 1. RFI SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.1 The State is interested in receiving informational responses from Vendors with knowledge of existing broadband infrastructure.
- 1.2 Below are the State's draft requirements. Vendors are not required to provide a response for each requirement or question and can use any format they choose to detail their existing infrastructure and recommendations to expand and/or enhance their broadband services into areas of the Mississippi Coastal Region with limited or no cost-effective ultra-high speed infrastructure and internet access. Information obtained from vendors will be used to determine the areas of greatest need, and significant consideration will be given to underserved locations for the purposes of developing the deployment plan.
- 1.3 Vendors should provide street-level maps and other pertinent information on areas currently served, as well as, information on desired infrastructure to increase and improve coverage area. Vendors should specify whether the broadband infrastructure is currently in use or not. Vendors should demonstrate how they would seek to achieve affordable and complete access to businesses and households.
- 1.4 Information received from this RFI process is for information purposes only and will not be evaluated. Vendor should understand that this information will remain confidential.
- 1.5 Vendors must submit (4) four copies of their responses. Responses will be accepted at any time prior to Tuesday, November 17, 2015, at 3:00 p.m. (Central Time) to Cerria Walker at the Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services, 3771 Eastwood Drive, Jackson, Mississippi 39211.
- 1.6 Vendor responses should be sealed and labeled as follows:

**SUBMITTED IN RESPONSE TO  
RFI NO. 3833  
Accepted until Tuesday, November 17, 2015 @ 3:00 p.m.,  
ATTENTION: Cerria Walker**

If you have any questions concerning the information above or if we can be of further assistance, please contact Cerria Walker by dialing 601-432-8013 or via email at [cerria.walker@its.ms.gov](mailto:cerria.walker@its.ms.gov).

cc: ITS Project File Number 42321

## REQUIREMENTS AND QUESTIONS

### 2. VENDOR INFORMATION

- 2.1 Vendor should be an Eligible Telecommunications Provider (ETP) to provide services in Mississippi.
- 2.2 Vendor should provide proof of existing broadband infrastructure in the Mississippi Coastal Region.
- 2.3 Vendor should describe fully how its company currently provides broadband services to areas within the Mississippi Coastal Region (e.g., fiber, wireless), including all available speeds and complete cost information.
- 2.4 Vendor should demonstrate experience in financing, designing, building, provisioning, and operating wireless or wireline broadband infrastructure.
- 2.5 Vendor should describe fully their company's existing broadband coverage area by street-level and/or tower locations.
- 2.6 Vendor should identify where fiber-based services are buried and/or aerial.
- 2.7 Vendor should identify its central office locations.
- 2.8 Vendor should identify the locations and the wind ratings for its tower infrastructure for wireless-based services.
- 2.9 Vendor should identify any existing interconnect agreements with other broadband providers and Internet Service Providers (ISP).

### 3. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The State is interested in your company's long-range broadband development plans for the Mississippi Coastal Region. The Vendor should describe future goals to expand broadband services into areas with limited or no cost-effective ultra-high speed broadband infrastructure and internet access. Information included should define the following:
  - 3.1.1 Specific areas within the Mississippi Coastal Region that should be targeted for deployment of the proposed infrastructure.
  - 3.1.2 Specific areas where businesses or residences are already servable by ultra-high speed broadband networks.
  - 3.1.3 Specific areas where it is seemingly impractical to require a new entrant to build a broadband network because businesses or residences already are servable by multiple advanced networks.

- 3.1.4 Specific areas that might not be included in this proposal because of environmental concerns, or other construction issues that seemingly make deployment impractical.
- 3.2 Vendor should describe how its company and the State can partner to best leverage the \$15 million commitment to improve and enhance ultra-high speed broadband infrastructure and internet access to promote better service coverage and economic development.
- 3.3 As part of the RFI response, vendors are encouraged to include ideas for continued funding and/or revenue generation from this investment.
- 3.4 Vendor should describe anticipated benefits as a result of improved and expanded broadband services to the Mississippi Coastal Region. These benefits include, but not limited to the following list.
  - 3.4.1 Economic development
  - 3.4.2 Quality of life
  - 3.4.3 Education
  - 3.4.4 Healthcare
  - 3.4.5 Security
  - 3.4.6 Entertainment
- 3.5 Vendor is encouraged to include ideas, proposals, and recommendations on how best to utilize the State's \$15 million commitment to upgrade or expand broadband infrastructure faster than would occur under a "business as usual" scenario.
- 3.6 Vendor is encouraged to include ideas, proposals, and recommendations on how best to utilize the State's \$15 million commitment to encourage adoption and use of broadband technologies.
- 3.7 Vendor should provide information of known State assets that would be of particular benefit to accelerate the deployment of broadband services (e.g., right-of-ways, government buildings and facilities, towers). What are those assets, and what information would help in the planning and deployment of the proposed infrastructure?
- 3.8 Vendor should describe if having the State as an anchor tenant is useful or of limited value in encouraging broadband deployment.
- 3.9 The State currently manages a state-wide MPLS network that connects all State government agencies to their headquarter locations, both State data centers, and the Internet. This network also provides connectivity to other logical networks including community colleges, law enforcement, K-12

schools, universities, libraries, National Guard, etc. How can the proposed broadband construction and deployment connect to the existing State network infrastructure?