



GRANT SOLICITATION

Grant Solicitation to Provide Wireless Last Mile Network in New Braintree

Solicitation No. 2020-MBI-02

**Massachusetts Technology Collaborative
75 North Drive
Westborough, MA 01581-3340
<http://www.masstech.org>**

Solicitation Issued: February 27, 2020

Team Leader: Cornell Robinson

Questions Due: March 18, 2020 @ 5 PM EST

Question and Answer File Posted: March 24, 2020 @ 5 PM EST

Statements of Qualifications Due: April 9, 2020 by 3:00 PM EST

1. INTRODUCTION

Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (“Mass Tech Collaborative”), on behalf of Massachusetts Broadband Institute (“MBI”), is issuing this New Braintree Wireless Last Mile Broadband Network Grant Solicitation (2020-MBI-02) (the “Solicitation”) to solicit responses from qualified firms (“Respondents”) interested in receiving grant funding to design, build, own, operate and maintain a wireless broadband network that serves the community of New Braintree, MA. Respondents will be competing against each other for selection to receive grant funding for a wireless broadband network that meets the specifications and requirements set forth in Section 2.2 (the “Wireless Broadband Network”). The submissions of all Respondents shall be compared and evaluated pursuant to the evaluation criteria set forth in this Solicitation, and a single Respondent shall be selected.

Mass Tech Collaborative will be the contracting entity on behalf of Massachusetts Broadband Institute. For the purposes of this Solicitation (and except where the specific context warrants otherwise), the entity names are used interchangeably.

2.0 THE GRANT

2.1 Project Description

The Town of New Braintree currently lacks access to broadband service and MBI/Mass Tech Collaborative seeks submissions from Respondents looking to offer a wireless broadband network capable of servicing residential premises in the Town of New Braintree. Additional information about New Braintree is listed in the table below and in the map attached as Attachment D that was developed by MBI. The Town of New Braintree Selectboard, acting on behalf of its residents, has requested that MBI/Mass Tech Collaborative solicit proposals for a Wireless Broadband Network.

New Braintree Demographic & Statistical Information:	
County:	Worcester
Municipality:	New Braintree
Pole Responsibility:	National Grid
Power Company:	National Grid
Estimated Premise Count:	379
Estimated Unit Count:	400
Estimated Number of Poles:	1510
Estimated Aerial Route Miles:	49

The Commonwealth has assets in and around the Town of New Braintree, which are expected to be considered by each Respondent as useful facilities that can be accessed for installing wireless equipment. It should be assumed that MBI/Mass Tech Collaborative will help coordinate with the relevant Commonwealth agencies to support the Selected Respondent’s efforts to secure access for use of these facilities to install wireless equipment in support of constructing the Wireless Broadband Network. The most notable facility is a tower at the Massachusetts State Police Academy which is located in the middle of New Braintree. Also, there is a Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation Fire Tower on Ragged Hill in nearby West Brookfield.

2.2 Network Specifications and Requirements

MBI does not have a preferred wireless technology and is open to considering technical approaches and network designs that incorporate a variety of technologies, waveforms, frequencies, spectrums, radios, and vertical assets. Instead of mandating a specific set of technologies MBI prefers to remain technology agnostic and focus on high level performance and coverage specifications.

The selected Respondent will construct a Wireless Broadband Network that has the following characteristics:

- Capable of providing broadband internet access that meets or exceeds the current Federal Communications Commission broadband standard of 25/3 Mbps download/upload speeds to at least 96% of the residential premises in the Town of New Braintree¹; and
- Comprised of backhaul links with sufficient bandwidth to support multiple simultaneous end user access to the Broadband Wireless Network at 25/3 Mbps download/upload speeds.

The selected Respondent will be required to operate the Wireless Broadband Network for a minimum period of ten (10) years from the date of final completion. The selected Respondent will: (i) maintain the Wireless Broadband Network in a state of good operation and repair consistent with applicable industry standards; (ii) continue to make broadband service available to at least 96% of the residential premises that can be served by the Wireless Broadband Network; and (iii) implement a network monitoring and management structure to ensure the smooth operation of the Wireless Broadband Network. The network monitoring and management structure shall incorporate the following functions: network operations center(s), network management system(s), 24/7 call center, customer service, billing, subscriber marketing, customer installation(s), and hardware and software upgrades.

2.3 Grant Overview

MBI has previously established an allocation of \$720,000 in state funding for a broadband solution for and is offering a grant of up to \$720,000 to support the buildout of a Wireless Broadband Network in the Town of New Braintree. MBI intends to work collaboratively with the Town of New Braintree throughout the grant process. The Town of New Braintree and MBI will jointly determine which, if any, Respondent to this Solicitation shall be selected and awarded a grant.

Grant funds may be used only to subsidize the selected Respondent's costs to construct a Wireless Broadband Network. Other than the funding provided through this Solicitation, the selected Respondent will bear all network construction costs as well as all costs associated with owning, operating, and maintaining the Wireless Broadband Network.

2.4 Programmatic Considerations

MBI has a strong preference to work with Respondents that possess the organizational capacity, financial resources and requisite experience to fulfill all grant obligations and effectively manage the construction risk and long-term operational risk associated with an initial ten to fifteen year commitment.

If a Respondent lacks the organizational, financial or experiential capacity to address the construction and/or long term operational risks associated with the Wireless Broadband Network project, MBI is prepared to work with the Town of New Braintree and the Respondent to identify ways to structure the transaction to address these concerns and appropriately mitigate these risks. Appropriate measures may include, without limitation, incorporating into any grant agreement instruments guaranty provisions such as a performance bond, completion insurance, surety provisions, or providing the Commonwealth or the Town of New Braintree with a security interest in the Respondent's network assets, or encouraging a Respondent to partner with a more established entity as a substantial partner and financial participant in the network construction and operation.

To the extent feasible, MBI will also seek to ensure that broadband service is made available on terms, conditions and prices that are reasonably comparable to those available in towns in the region that are

¹ Please note that the selected Respondent will be required to submit speed test results that demonstrate that the required percentage of residential premises have the ability to receive 25/3 Mbps download/upload speeds upon completion of network build phases. These speed test results must be able to be verified by MBI.

already receiving broadband service.

3.0 GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

3.1 General Application Process Submission Instructions

There is a two-step process to apply for funding under this Solicitation. Phase 1 will involve submission of a statement of qualifications. Respondents that are invited by MBI to proceed to Phase 2 will be offered the opportunity to submit a full grant application that will include, among other things, the Respondent's high level network design, approach to constructing and operating the network, services to be offered and a project schedule and budget. MBI has designed this Solicitation to permit Respondents, MBI, and the Town of New Braintree, acting on behalf of its residents, to engage in an iterative process to develop high value proposals to generate the best value broadband solution for the Town of New Braintree. MBI anticipates that full grant applications will be reviewed by MBI and representatives of the Town of New Braintree and that one or more full grant applications may be refined through discussions or negotiations with the Respondent(s). MBI, and the Town of New Braintree.

Following a final decision to award a grant, MBI will make a grant award directly to the selected Respondent to serve the residential premises within the Town of New Braintree in the amount up to the Town's designated grant allocation.

Respondents are cautioned to read this Solicitation carefully and to conform to its requirements. Failure to comply with the requirements of this Solicitation may serve as grounds for rejection of the Respondent's submission.

3.2 Phase 1 – Submission Instructions – Statement of Qualifications

- a. All Phase 1 Statements of Qualifications must be submitted electronically, as a .pdf or .doc with the budget in Excel format.
- b. Electronic Statements of Qualifications **must** be delivered to:
proposals@masstech.org
(please include the solicitation number in the subject heading)
- c. Any and all responses, Applications, data, materials, information and documentation submitted to Mass Tech Collaborative in response to this Solicitation shall become Mass Tech Collaborative's property and shall be subject to public disclosure. As a public entity, the Mass Tech Collaborative is subject to the Massachusetts Public Records Law (set forth at Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 66). There are very limited and narrow exceptions to disclosure under the Public Records Law. If a Respondent wishes to have the Mass Tech Collaborative treat certain information or documentation as confidential, the Respondent must submit a written request to the Mass Tech Collaborative's General Counsel's office no later than 5:00 p.m. fourteen (14) business days prior to the applicable submission deadline. The request must precisely identify the information and/or documentation that is the subject of the request and provide a detailed explanation supporting the application of the statutory exemption(s) from the public records cited by the Respondent. The General Counsel will issue a written determination within ten (10)

business days of receipt of the written request. If the General Counsel approves the request, the Respondent shall clearly label the relevant information and/or documentation as **"CONFIDENTIAL"** in the submission and **shall only include the confidential material in the hard copy of the submission**. Any statements in a submission by the Respondent reserving any confidentiality or privacy rights that is inconsistent with these requirements and procedures will be disregarded.

3.3 Submission Requirements for Phase 1

Respondents are required to submit a Statement of Qualifications that includes:

- Executive Summary: a summary of their organization, their organizational structure, their current operations, and their financial capacity to design, build, own, operate and maintain a Wireless Broadband Network. Respondent should indicate if existing operational capacity (e.g. staffing, resources and network monitoring infrastructure, including the Respondent's network operations center) will be sufficient to operate and maintain the new Wireless Broadband Network that Respondent proposes to build. Respondent should also clearly identify the extent to which existing operational capacity will need to be expanded or augmented to construct, operate and maintain the new Wireless Broadband Network. Respondent should discuss at a high level their potential approach to implementing the Wireless Broadband Network project.
- Experience and References: An overview of Respondent's experience particularly related to building and operating wireless broadband networks; including brief descriptions of any wireless broadband networks of similar size, scope and characteristics located in the United States that the Respondent has built, operated, and/or significantly expanded; and provide contact information for municipal or other governmental references for each such network.
- Project Team: An organizational structure that lists the team members who will be responsible for project management of the construction of the Wireless Broadband Network,

The Respondent must submit the following additional documents in Phase 1:

- Application Cover Sheet (Attachment A)
- Authorized Application Signature and Acceptance Form (Attachment B). **By executing the Authorized Respondent's Signature and Acceptance Form and submitting a response to this Solicitation, Respondents certify that they (1) acknowledge and understand the procedures for handling materials submitted to the Mass Tech Collaborative as set forth herein, (2) agree to be bound by those procedures, (3) acknowledges that the statutory exemptions from the Massachusetts public records law are very limited and (4) agree that the Mass Tech Collaborative shall not be liable under any circumstances for the disclosure of any materials submitted to the Mass Tech Collaborative pursuant to this solicitation or upon the Respondent's selection as a grantee.**
- Officers Certificate (Attachment C)

3.4 Phase 1 Timeframe

Phase 1 of the Solicitation will proceed according to the following schedule. The target dates are subject to change. Therefore, Respondents are encouraged to check the Mass Tech Collaborative and Comm-Buys websites frequently for updates to the schedule.

Task	Date:
Solicitation Released	February 27, 2020
Questions Due	March 18, 2020 @ 5 PM EST
Question and Answer File Posted	March 24, 2020 @ 5 PM EST
Statements of Qualifications Due	April 9, 2020 @ 3 PM EST

3.5 Questions

Questions regarding this Solicitation must be submitted by electronic mail to proposals@masstech.org with the following Subject Line: "Questions – Solicitation No. 2020-MBI-02". All questions must be received by 5:00 p.m. EST on March 18, 2020. Responses to all questions received will be posted on or before 5:00 p.m. on March 24, 2020 to Mass Tech Collaborative and Comm-Buys website(s).

4.0 PHASE 1 EVALUATION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

A team from Massachusetts Broadband Institute, with the input from the Town of New Braintree, will collect and review the Statement of Qualifications against the following criteria:

- Extent to which Respondent's financial resources, strength, stability and outlook provide reasonable assurance of the Respondent's ability to address MBI's concerns about execution of the grant obligations and long term operation of the Wireless Broadband Network and delivery of broadband services
- Extent to which Respondent's organizational structure supports fulfilment of grant project goals and requirements
- Extent to which Respondent's experience demonstrates successful construction, operation, and maintenance of broadband networks of similar size, scale and characteristics. MBI will view more favorably Respondents that provide evidence of successful wireless networks that are currently being operated in the region. MBI will also view more favorably Respondents that demonstrate experience serving or demonstrate ability to serve rural broadband markets.

Respondent(s) deemed to be qualified will then be invited by MBI to participate in Phase 2 of this Grant Solicitation and submit a full grant application that will include, among other things, the Respondent's high level network design, approach to constructing and operating the network, services to be offered and a project schedule and budget.

5.0 GENERAL CONDITIONS

5.1 General Information

- a) If a submission by the Respondent fails to meet any material terms, conditions, requirements or procedures, it may be deemed unresponsive and disqualified. The Mass Tech Collaborative reserves the right to waive omissions or irregularities that it determines to be not material.
- b) This Solicitation, as may be amended from time to time by Mass Tech Collaborative, does not commit Mass Tech Collaborative to select any firm(s), pay any costs incurred in preparing a submission or in connection with the award of any grants. Mass Tech Collaborative reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to make no awards through this Solicitation, to withdraw the Solicitation, to engage in preliminary discussions with prospective Respondents, to accept or reject any or all submissions received, to request supplemental or clarifying information, to negotiate with any or all qualified Respondents, and to request modifications to submissions in accordance with negotiations, all to the same extent as if this were a Request for Information.
- c) Unless otherwise specified in this Solicitation, all communications, responses, and documentation must be in English, and all costs or figures in U.S. currency. All submissions must be submitted in accordance with the specific terms of this Solicitation.
- d) On matters related to this Solicitation that arise prior to an award decision by the Mass Tech Collaborative, Respondents shall limit communications with the Mass Tech Collaborative to the Procurement Team Leader, the MBI Director and such other individuals as the Mass Tech Collaborative may designate from time to time. No other Mass Tech Collaborative employee or representative is authorized to provide any information or respond to any questions or inquiries

concerning this Solicitation. Respondents may contact the Procurement Team Leader for this Solicitation in the event this Solicitation is incomplete.

- e) The Mass Tech Collaborative may provide reasonable accommodations, including the provision of materials in an alternative format, for Respondents with disabilities or other hardships. Respondents requiring accommodations shall submit requests in writing, with supporting documentation justifying the accommodations, to the Procurement Team Leader. The Mass Tech Collaborative reserves the right to grant or reject any request for accommodations.
- f) Respondent's Statement of Qualifications as well as any other submissions under this Solicitation shall be treated by the Mass Tech Collaborative as an accurate statement of Respondent's capabilities and experience. Should any statement asserted by Respondent prove to be inaccurate or inconsistent with the foregoing, such inaccuracy or inconsistency shall constitute sufficient cause for Mass Tech Collaborative in its sole discretion to reject the submission(s) and/or terminate of any resulting Agreement.

5.2 Posting of Modifications/Addenda to Solicitation

This Solicitation has been distributed electronically using the Mass Tech Collaborative and COMMBUYS websites. If the Mass Tech Collaborative determines that it is necessary to revise any part of this Solicitation, or if additional data is necessary to clarify any of its provisions, an addendum will be posted to the websites. It is the responsibility of each potential Applicant to check the Mass Tech Collaborative, MBI and COMMBUYS websites for any addenda or modifications to the Solicitation. The Mass Tech Collaborative accepts no liability and will provide no accommodation to Respondents who submit a response based on an out-of-date Solicitation.

Attachment A
Application Cover Sheet

Respondent Information	
Primary Respondent – Organization	
DUNS Number	Respondent Taxpayer ID# and jurisdiction (<i>e.g., “a Massachusetts corporation”</i>)
Mailing Street Address:	
State:	City/ Town:
Website	Zip Code:

Point of Contact Information	
Respondent’s Designated Representative: Authorized to commit organization; notified upon Phase 1 determination	
Name:	Title:
Organization: <i>If different from Respondent</i>	Phone:
Email Address:	Fax:
Mailing Street Address: <i>If different from Respondent</i>	City/ Town: <i>If different from Respondent</i>
State: <i>If different from Respondent</i>	State: Zip +4 Code: <i>If different from Respondent</i>
Respondent’s Project Manager: Contact over course of Solicitation to respond to questions (if different from above)	
Name:	Title:
Organization:	Phone:
Email Address:	Fax:
Mailing Street Address:	City/ Town:
State:	State: Zip +4 Code:

Attachment B
Massachusetts Technology Collaborative
Authorized Respondent's Signature and Acceptance Form

The undersigned is a duly authorized representative of the Respondent listed below. The Respondent has read and understands the Solicitation requirements. The Respondent acknowledges that all of the terms and conditions of the Solicitation are mandatory, and that Respondent's Phase 1 submission is compliant with such requirements. The Respondent specifically acknowledges the application of the procedures regarding disclosure of sensitive information as set forth in Section 3.2 (c) of the Solicitation, and specifically agrees that it shall be bound by those procedures.

The Respondent understands that, if selected by the Mass Tech Collaborative, the Respondent and the Mass Tech Collaborative will execute written agreements specifying the mutual requirements of participation. The undersigned has either (*please check one*):

The Respondent understands that submission of a Statement of Qualifications does not guarantee an invitation to submit a full application.

I certify that Respondent is in compliance with all corporate filing requirements and State tax laws.

I further certify that the statements made in this response to the Solicitation, including all attachments and exhibits, are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Respondent: _____
(Printed Name of Respondent)

By: _____
(Signature of Authorized Representative)

Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

Attachment C
Officer's Certificate

The following questions must be answered by the Respondent.

1. Is your organization in compliance with all its obligations under all bank lending and other credit (e.g., equipment leases) arrangements and has it been in compliance with these requirements during the past 12 months?
Yes ☐ No ☐
2. During the past 5 years has your organization filed for bankruptcy or has any Principal (more than 5% stockholder or other type of ownership) or officer been an officer or Principal of another firm that filed for or been the subject of any bankruptcy or insolvency proceeding?
Yes ☐ No ☐
3. Has your organization complied with all of its obligations to federal, state and local taxing authorities over the past three years?
Yes ☐ No ☐
4. Has your organization been a named party (either voluntarily or involuntarily) in any legal proceedings, administrative proceedings or arbitrations initiated by a local, state or federal governmental body within the past 5 years that resulted in your organization being sanctioned or ordered to pay fines or penalties in excess of \$10,000?
Yes ☐ No ☐
5. Has your organization or any officer or Principal been convicted in any criminal proceeding (other than minor traffic and other non-felony offenses) during the past 7 years or currently the subject of any similar criminal proceeding?
Yes ☐ No ☐
6. Are your organization's financial statements audited? and,
Yes ☐ No ☐
7. If so, have you received a "going concern" opinion from such audit firm during the past three years?
Yes ☐ No ☐
8. Are more than 25% of your revenues derived from any single customer?
Yes ☐ No ☐
9. Did your organization have positive net income in each of the three most recent fiscal years?
Yes ☐ No ☐
10. Do your organization's tangible current assets (current assets less goodwill) exceed its current liabilities?"
Yes ☐ No ☐
11. Has your organization been terminated or failed to complete work within the past 5 years on a project funded in whole or in part with public funds (local, state or federal).
Yes ☐ No ☐
12. Certify your organization has internal accounting controls as required by Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30, Section 39R(c).
Yes ☐ No ☐

If you have answered 'Yes' to questions 2, 7 or 8 please explain.

If you answered 'Yes' to questions 4 or 5 please provide appropriate details.

If you answered 'Yes' to question 11 please provide appropriate details.

If you have answered 'No' to questions 1, 3, 6, 9, 10, or 12 please explain.

Attach additional sheets if necessary.

Certification

The undersigned, _____, hereby certifies

(Name and Title)

that I am a duly authorized representative of _____

(Organization Name)

and that all of the foregoing answers and all statements contained in any explanation are complete, true and correct. Providing false or misleading information or failure to provide all required information will be considered grounds for disqualification. I attest to the accuracy of all information contained in this proposal and verify that the information submitted is in fact complete, accurate and true.

Signed and sworn under the penalties of perjury

Dated at: _____

(Location)

This _____ day of _____, 202_.

By: _____

(Signature)

Name: _____

(Printed or Typed)

Title/Position: _____

Attachment D
New Braintree Map

CONNECTING THE COMMONWEALTH
WWW.MASSBROADBAND.ORG

MBI
MASSACHUSETTS
BROADBAND INSTITUTE



Last Mile Planning

Broadband Infrastructure and Service in:
NEW BRAINTREE, MA

Serviceable Premises

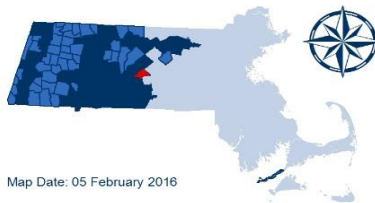
- Connected CAI Locations (5)
- Unserved Locations (379)

Existing Broadband Infrastructure

- MassBroadband 123 Interconnection Points
- MassBroadband 123 Fiber-Optic Cable

Base Map

- Building Locations
- Town Boundaries
- Roads
- Water Bodies



Map Date: 05 February 2016

0 0.5 1 2
Miles

