



Eastern Slopes Regional Broadband RFP Q&A

11/30/2022

(updated 12/01/2022)

- (1) MCA has provided guidance around grant funding and has expressed interest in the formation of Broadband Utility Districts (BUDS). Will ESRB accept an RFP response that articulates how this can be accomplished? Such a response will not follow the numbering convention or pricing model but will contain a long-term financial analysis on the sustainability of the BUD.

The ESRB will consider any proposal that results in meeting the goals stated in the RFP. The ESRB is not limited to considering any specific operating or funding model. RFP responses should follow the conventions of the RFP as best they can but will not be disqualified for being innovative or varying from convention. The ESRB committee will seek additional information from responding vendors as necessary during the evaluation and analysis process.

- (2) 6.15 States “the successful vendor may be required to post a 100% Performance and Payment Bond.” What will be the factors that determine if this is required? Also, performance and payment bonds come in many different forms; is there anything specific that is being sought?

Nothing specific is being sought. It is expected that such details will be finalized during contract negotiations with a selected vendor.

- (3) Has pole data been collected?

GIS pole data for the region was supplied by the client.

- (4) Mapping Information and Gap Analysis - The table provided includes only Unserved Households. Is there data on Underserved Households as these also are available for grant funding.

In the table on page 12 of the RFP only the unserved household numbers are listed. Many of the remaining households in the Towns of Denmark, Lovell and Fryeburg would fall into the underserved category according to MCA definitions of served, unserved and underserved. Many of these households have access to internet service that is greater than 100/20 but do not have access to service that is at least 100/100. The exact number of underserved households is unknown at this time but it is estimated that there are over 3,000 underserved households in the Towns of Denmark, Fryeburg and Lovell that would be eligible for some level of grant funding.

- (5) Are the seasonal household's additive to the unserved households or included in the unserved total? For example, in Brownfield, there are 946 household's total. That is not 946 unserved plus the 315 seasonal for a total of 1,261- it's just the 946 total - that is what it looks like.

The seasonal household counts are included in the total household counts. So yes the total for Brownfield is 946 and that includes the seasonal counts.

- (6) The 427 miles is everything, served and unserved?

Yes

- (7) How will the project be funded? Will the towns be seeking funding through MCA?

Yes, the goal is to go application in the Spring of 2023. The desired business model and financial arrangement with winning bidder(s) will not be known until the RFP process has been completed. The ESRB will consider any proposal that results in meeting the goals stated in the RFP. The ESRB is not limited to considering any specific operating or funding model.

- (8) Will an extension be granted due to the Thanksgiving holiday? (I know I asked this previously.)

Yes, and extension has been granted. Proposals are now due by 4:00 PM on 12/19/2022.

- (9) What is the ideal timing for this project to be up and running?

Grant approvals and the municipal approval processes would extend into the 2023 calendar year. The goal would be to begin construction as early as possible in 2023 with customers beginning to come online in late 2024.