

Request for proposal

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For

Lit Fiber or Wireless Internet Services

Shepherd School District

Proposals will be accepted until:

8 AM Mountain Standard Time (MST) on Jan 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018

## **INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS**

### **Timeline/ Schedule for Bid & Evaluation Process:**

November 16, 2017 Form 470 submitted and RFP available  
Site walk-through scheduled for 10 AM MST on November 28, 2017. Site visit is not mandatory; however, is highly recommended. To set up an appointment, please email Janice Ripley at [j-ripley@shepherd.k12.mt.us](mailto:j-ripley@shepherd.k12.mt.us) to schedule an appointment. Scheduled appointments will meet at the Shepherd School, 7842 Shepherd RD, Shepherd, MT 59079.

December 18, 2017 Questions submitted on or before this date to Nicole Jones at [njirwj@midrivers.com](mailto:njirwj@midrivers.com).

January 3, 2018 Deadline for RFP Responses at 8 AM MST. Evaluation of bids to follow at 9 AM MST.

July 1, 2018 Delivery date of new service.

### **Submission of Bid Proposals:**

Please submit your proposal, including all supporting documentation to:

Shepherd School District

ATTN: Scott Carter, Superintendent

7842 Shepherd RD

Shepherd, MT 59079

Bids must be identified as “RFP - District Lit Fiber or Wireless”. Bids may be submitted by email or mail. If bids are submitted by mail, proposals shall contain one (1) hard copy labeled “ORIGINAL” and one extra (1) hard copy labeled “COPY”. Also, included in the envelope shall be an electronic copy of the submittal on USB/flash drive. (Note: This is to comply with any public records requests that the District may receive after award of contract for this solicitation.)

Email bids to Janice Ripley at [j-ripley@shepherd.k12.mt.us](mailto:j-ripley@shepherd.k12.mt.us).

The District is not responsible for proposals delivered or received late. Any proposals received after the scheduled closing time will be returned unopened.

### **Due Date**

Proposals are due on **January 3, 2018 at 8 AM** Mountain Standard Time.

**Proposals received after this deadline may be returned unopened.**

**Contact Information**

Questions concerning this solicitation must be directed to Nicole Jones in writing at njjrwj@midrivers.com and submitted no later than 4:00 pm MST on December 28, 2017.

**District Rights**

The Shepherd School District, hereto referred to as the District, reserves the right to reject any or all bids.

**Withdrawal of Bid Proposals:**

Any bid proposal may be withdrawn prior to the closing date. No bid proposal shall be withdrawn for a period of 90 days after the actual opening without a written request explaining the cause for the withdrawal and without the written consent of the District after reviewing the cause.

**Evaluation of Proposals:**

An evaluator/evaluation committee will evaluate all responsive proposals based upon the evaluation rubrics as set within this RFP and recommend an award to the highest scoring respondent.

**Opportunity for Discussion/Negotiation and/or Oral Presentation/Product Demonstration:**

After receipt of proposals and prior to the recommendation of award, the District may initiate discussions with one or more offerors should clarification or negotiation be necessary. Offerors may also be required to make an oral presentation and/or product demonstration to clarify their RFP response or to further define their offer. In either case, offerors should be prepared to send qualified personnel to 7842 Shepherd RD, Shepherd, MT 59079 to discuss technical and contractual aspects of their proposal. Oral presentations and product demonstrations, if requested, shall be at the offeror's expense.

### **Contract Execution:**

The bidder to whom an award is made may be required to enter into a written contract with the District.

The bidder chosen by the Shepherd School District may be required to sign an agreement holding Shepherd School District, its employees, representatives and agents harmless from any liabilities to the bidder caused by delays in funding by the Schools and Library Division which are not proximately caused or under the control of Shepherd School District.

### **Licensure & Insurance**

The respondent shall obtain and maintain all licenses, permits, liability insurance, workman's compensation insurance and comply with any and all other standards or regulations required by Federal, State, or local statutes, ordinances and rules during the performance of any contract between Shepherd School District and the respondent. All responses shall include a description of insurances and proof of liability insurance. All bids received shall specify whether the District or the contractor shall carry fire, liability, or other insurance during construction.

Any subcontractor used by the vendor will be considered an authorized representative of the vendor. Said subcontractor must carry all assurances, certifications, insurances, and other listed requirements of this RFP or other applicable laws.

### **Scope of Services:**

Shepherd School District wishes to compare leased lit fiber and wireless service solutions for delivery of Internet Services to the district. The current Internet Service is provided with an 80Mb/ 20 Mb wireless internet connection to serve over 820 students, which is not able to support the District's growing bandwidth needs. Solution may have to bond to existing wireless solution.

Respondent must run infrastructure or service to an existing network closet at 45/56/30 N and 108/20/38 W at 3100-foot elevation within the building and/ or as designated by Shepherd School District during site walk-through.

The new service is being planned to begin on July 1, 2018 or receipt of FCDL notification, whichever is later.

The Shepherd School District is seeking options for bids including fully managed leased lit fiber and/ or a wireless solution. The applicant will accept bids for the leased lit fiber or wireless services from one vendor or from separate vendors. In other words, respondents may bid any one of the bid options, or all options.

Options can include special construction or one-time E-Rate eligible non-recurring costs as well as E-Rate eligible recurring circuit costs.

Based on the bids, and both a short-term and long-term cost effectiveness analysis, Shepherd School District will determine which, if any, of the lit service or wireless service or some combination of solutions is acceptable. The specifications related to each solution option follows.

**Leased Lit Service or Wireless Solution:**

The Shepherd School District, must have a dedicated fully managed leased lit fiber or wireless solution with speed options (upload and download) of 100 Mb, 200Mb, 300Mb, 500 MB, or 1 GB with Service Level Agreement (SLA) guarantees to the specified site. Solution may have to bond to existing wireless connection.

The solutions must be scalable to meet demand including 1:1, BYOD, and/ or guest access. Bids should demonstrate a scalable solution to meet future demand. Shepherd School District currently has approximately 821 students.

**All respondents must be capable of providing telecommunication/ internet including access services under the Universal Service Support Mechanism.**

***Leased Lit Service/ Wireless Price Proposal***

The “Lit/ Wireless Pricing Sheet” worksheet in the attached spreadsheet includes columns for respondents to provide pricing options of 100 Mb, 200Mb, 300Mb, 500 MB, and 1 GB. Price quotes are requested 12 months, 36 months, and 60 months’ terms of service.

As such, prices should be all inclusive. All inclusive, in this case means, including all **special construction and/ or non-recurring costs (NRC)** (see description in later section) required by the vendor to commence service and all **monthly recurring costs (MRC)** should be included in the requisite columns of the pricing sheets. No increased pricing will be allowed during the term of the quoted special construction/NRC and/ or MRC rate in each pricing cell of the spreadsheet.

**Each lit/ wireless service response must also include description of proposal, Service Level Agreement, timeline, network diagram, demarcation, references, and Connect America Fund status as described in later sections.**

Proposals should offer pricing with the majority of the costs being paid up-front and minimal annual or monthly recurring costs. The solution should include all costs related to the deployment of the proposed circuit to the designated demarcation point as noted at the aforementioned longitude and latitude or as designated during the site visit, such that there are

no additional costs that are expected to be incurred by the district at the end of the project. Any additional costs such as conduit, etc. that are not included in the bid to be able to execute a fully-managed internet connection should be identified in the bid.

Preference will be given to proposals to meet the requirements of the RFP with the following information identified in the bid:

- If fiber solution, indicate the total number of fiber strands reasonable for the District of this size for the scalable internet so there is no warehousing; any excess fiber strands should be cost allocated out and identified separately in bid. If 12-strand fiber is the standards solution, please indicate why it is the most cost-effective solution over a lower strand fiber (i.e. 4-strand fiber may be more expensive than a 12-strand fiber).
- Identify the longitude and latitude of the start point of the network and the longitude and latitude of the end point of the network related to the special construction charges.
- Please provide the details of the route(s) being constructed and the cost breakdown of the Network Equipment and Labor. Complete the cost break-down on the attached excel spreadsheet named “Cost Break-down of Route”.
- If fiber solution, provide the value for route fee and cost per foot. The route feet and cost per foot provided should only include the new fiber build. It should not include the distance or cost of any existing infrastructure. Please provide the following information related to your Special Construction project:
  - Total Project Plant Route Feet
  - Average Cost per Foot of Outside Plant
  - Total Strands
  - Number of Eligible Strands
- Provide a map of the suggested route to be constructed on one of the mapping websites such as Google Maps, Map Quest, etc. That mapped out route should be available in either a .kmz or .json file.
- Indicate in bid if services will be provided by aerial, direct buried and/or buried with conduit fiber route or wireless. Bids should indicate the cost per foot for the Aerial portion of the fiber build; direct buried portion, and buried with conduit route, if applicable.

### ***Leased Lit/ Wireless service - Service Level Agreement***

Respondent will provide a description of the proposed services and service levels provided with the leased lit fiber and/ or wireless services responses. The respondent will provide a proposed Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the RFP response. The proposal must include a description of the following services and how these services will be measured.

- Network Availability: the provider will make all reasonable efforts to ensure 99.9-99.99% network availability of each circuit.
  - Lit and Operations proposals only: Frame/packet loss .25% commitment;
  - Lit and Operations proposals only: 25 ms Network Latency Commitment;
  - Lit and Operations proposals only: 10 ms Network Jitter Commitment;
  - There is no right of provider to limit or throttle the capacity of the circuit at any time for any reason.

In addition to the required services, the proposal may include but is not to be limited to the following services:

- Network Operations Center: Solution will provide customer support functions including problem tracking, resolution and escalation support management on a 24x7x365 basis. Customer has the right and is encouraged to call concerning any problems that may arise relative to its connection with Vendor provided services.
- Trouble Reporting and Response: Upon interruption, degradation or loss of service, Customer may contact Vendor by defined method with a response based on trouble level. Upon contact from the Customer, the Vendor support team will initiate an immediate response to resolve any Customer issue. Customer will receive rapid feedback on trouble resolution, including potential resolution time.
- Escalation: In the event that service has not been restored in a timely manner, or the Customer does not feel that adequate attention has been allocated, the Customer can escalate the trouble resolution by request. A list of escalation contacts will be provided when implementation schedule is completed.
- Resolution: The Customer will be notified immediately once the problem is resolved and will be asked for verbal closure of the incident.
- Trouble Reporting, Escalation and Resolution: A detail trouble reporting, escalation and resolution plan will be provided to the district.
- Measurement: Vendor stated commitment is to respond to any outage within two (2) hours and a four (4) hour restoration of service. Time starts from the time the Customer contacts the Vendor and identifies the problem. Credits for Outages of shortage will be identified.
- Reports: Upon request, an incident report will be made available to the Customer within five (5) working days of resolution of the trouble.
- Link Performance per segment: The service will maintain the proposed Link Performance throughout the term of the contract.
- Historical uptime: Provide aggregate uptime statistics for your proposed service in the geographic area encompassing the Shepherd School District.

## **Description of Proposal**

Respondent will provide a description of their proposal for all services and solutions. Description will include an overview of the proposal, any deviations from the requested architecture, design or requirements, assumptions made, other detail Shepherd School District may find useful or necessary (or could differentiate the solution from a competing proposal).

## **Timeline**

For each response, respondents must include a construction roadmap timeline for all sites. Preference is given to responses with a service start for all sites on July 1, 2018 or as closely as feasible once a funding commitment notification is received.

## **Demarcation**

All solutions whether leased managed lit fiber or wireless construction must terminate service or infrastructure to an existing network closet inside of the designated demarcation address specified in the “Addresses” worksheet of the included spreadsheet. Solutions bringing service to the property line but not inside of the demarcation address are not preferable.

Respondent must specify your expected demarcation setup included in base fees, e.g. wall mounted CPE and Cat6a handoff. All costs including network equipment, if required, conduit, labor, permitting, etc. must be detailed in the bid. Applicants are required to have this information for the Form 471 and PIA Reviews. Preference will be given to proposals that detail all costs associated with special construction.

## **Network Diagram**

For each response, respondents must include a network diagram displaying the paths to be used to serve each endpoint.

## **References**

For each response, respondent must provide 3 references from current or recent customers (preferably K-12) with projects equivalent to the size of Shepherd School District. If respondent



responds to more than one option (e.g. leased lit fiber and wireless), provide 3 references for each.

### **Connect America Fund Consideration**

For each school site, the respondent must note whether the address is included in a region where the respondent has already received (or is pending receipt of) funding via the Connect America Fund. In these cases, mention how the NRC or special construction charges have been adjusted considering the other source of funding.

### **Special Construction and Non-Recurring Cost**

Respondents providing proposals which require an upfront payment may include a special construction cost or non-recurring cost. This upfront payment is considered **special construction** if any new infrastructure (i.e. tower, fiber, etc) is being installed or construction is required. If new infrastructure installation is not necessary or there is no construction for a wireless solution, the payment is considered a **non-recurring cost** and must be entered into the pricing sheet accordingly.

Special construction charges for leased lit service or wireless projects as defined by the FCC's Modernization Order include construction, design, engineering and project management. The applicant requests that the respondents consider allowing Shepherd School District to pay the non-discount share (share of special construction costs that are the responsibility of the applicant) to be paid in equal annual installments over the four years from Funding Year 2018 to Funding Year 2021 inclusive. **Responses must include agreement or non-agreement of this request.**

The amount of special construction capital requested will be reviewed based on the cost of historical builds for similar services in the region. Respondents should provide only the special construction costs allocable to the Shepherd School District service.

### **Required Notice to Proceed and Funding Availability**

Shepherd School District will follow the purchasing policies of the Shepherd School District Board and requirements and procedures of the FCC's E-Rate program as administered by the Universal Service Administrative Company to be eligible for all available funding.<sup>[1]</sup><sup>[SEP]</sup> The implementation of any associated contracts resulting from this competitive bid process will be dependent on the District's issuance of a written Notice to Proceed. E-Rate funding notification alone will not signify Notice to Proceed. The district will have the right to allow the contract to expire without implementation if appropriate funding does not come available. The District has the right to accept or reject any and/or all bids.

**All responding vendors must be a registered vendor with USAC and have a USAC issued Service Provider Identification Number-SPIN. Responding vendors who do not have a USAC issue SPIN must demonstrate reasonable efforts to obtain a SPIN before the service start date.**

### **E-Rate Modernization Order Note**

Special construction and service eligibility for reimbursement have changed starting funding year 2016. See the Federal Communications Commission E-Rate modernization order 2 (WC Docket No. 13-184) (<https://www.fcc.gov/document/fcc-releases-order-modernizing-e-rate-21st-century-connectivity>) for more information.

### **RFP Scoring Rubrics**

#### **Lit Fiber or Wireless Service (Also used for final comparison)**

<b>% Weight</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
<i>Mandatory</i> 25% - 35%*	*E-Rate eligible recurring and one-time circuit costs <sup>1</sup>
<i>Mandatory</i> 10% - 15%	Timing: adherence to district preferred rollout timeframe <sup>2</sup>
<i>Mandatory</i> 10% - 15%	Ability to support requirements as laid out in the RFP <sup>3</sup>
<i>Mandatory</i> 10% - 15%	Proposed contract terms and conditions <sup>4</sup>
<i>Mandatory</i> 10-15%	Service Reliability
<i>Optional</i>	Past experiences with vendor/ Montana vendor. <sup>6</sup>
<i>Optional</i>	Use of scalable solution <sup>7</sup>
<i>Optional</i>	Provider references <sup>8</sup>
<i>Optional</i>	Risk for district <sup>9</sup>

\*this element must always be the highest weighted

#### **Notes:**

1: **E-rate eligible circuit cost** is the total cost of ownership that includes special construction and NRC in addition to MRC and includes any and all services that will be applied on a monthly

recurring basis. E-rate special construction costs should be clearly indicated and separated from any other E-rate eligible NRC cost. All services offered must be eligible for E-rate Category 1 discounts.

**2: Timing of build:** all bidders are advised to commit to an initial roadmap for rollout of their solution per circuit, based on the E-Rate and District timeline. The roadmap should include all steps towards deployment and “go live” of all circuits within this RFP. Any risks or contingencies on the timing should be clearly highlighted in the response.

**3: Requirements:** preference may be given to bidders who can provide the highest level of compliance to all requirements laid out in this document. Preference may be given to bidders who are agreeable to bill E-rate discounts on the bill (SPI), allow a four year installment plan, bring the service inside the demarcation, and provide cost details in bid as laid out in the RFP.

**4: Terms, conditions, Insurance:** preference may be given to bidders that provide the most favorable conditions for implementation and ongoing service. These elements include (but are not restricted to): length of contracts, ability to scale bandwidth within the contract period, technical SLAs, flexibility in timing of up-front payments, agreeable to put E-rate discounts on bills, etc.

Prices to remain firm through the Schools and Libraries Division’s approval process, execution, and duration of the proposed contract. In the event of a price decrease for service or from the manufacturer, said decrease shall be passed on to the school and documented with the new price sheet sent to Shepherd School District.

Installation changes made to fulfill these concerns are the financial responsibility of the vendor.

The Shepherd School District expects that vendors are fully certified and knowledgeable in regard to the physical cabling, installation, and configuration of all items required by this RFP.

The vendor will fully comply with all building codes, as well as address all concerns raised by officials (either school district, local, state, or federal).

Vendor must provide satisfactory proof of insurance(s) in regard to the requirements of this RFP.

Any subcontractor used by the vendor will be considered an authorized representative of the vendor. Said subcontractor must carry all assurances, certifications, insurance, and other listed requirements of this RFP or other applicable laws.

All bids received shall specify whether the District or the contractor shall carry fire, liability, or other insurance during construction.

**5: Service Reliability:** preference may be given to bidders that provide a favorable SLA for the district, and have a robust network architecture and documented history of service reliability.

**6: Past Experience with Vendor/ MT Vendor:** preference may be given to vendors that have a positive past experience with the applicant and/ or be a local Montana vendor.

7: **Scalable solutions:** preference may be given to solutions that will provide maximum future scalability. Bidders are encouraged to outline how the proposed solution could be scaled into the future, including potential pricing increments for additional bandwidth that may be likely during the contract period.

8: **References:** preference may be given to bidders who are able to demonstrate a track record of successfully working with K-12 school districts or similarly sized customers within the state of Montana to provide high-quality, affordable solutions and exemplary ongoing service. Bidders should be able to provide access to up to 3 references as part of the evaluation process, as and when, requested by the District.

9: **Risk for district:** District seeks to minimize any potential risks related to construction of new infrastructure. When evaluating solutions, the district may award more points to lower risk solutions and fewer points to high risk solutions according to SLAs, maintenance, construction proposals, up-front costs versus monthly recurring costs, proposal cost details, proposed construction end-point, etc.