



# **Request for Proposals for Town-Wide Broadband Project Fort Fairfield, Maine**

**Issue Date: August, 09 2021**

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## 1. Executive Summary

The Town of Fort Fairfield is located in Central Aroostook County, Maine. This vibrant community of 3500 is the 6th largest municipality in The County. Fort Fairfield is named after Governor John Fairfield, who served two terms as Maine's Governor.

The town lies on the eastern Canadian border and is a dual township, meaning it consists of two six-mile by six-mile parcels with a total area of just over 78 square miles - comprised mainly of thick woods and fertile farmland. Once the Potato Capital of the World, agriculture continues to play an important role in our economy with large potato, broccoli and livestock farms spread throughout the town's borders.

The Town's purpose in posting this RFP is to address the broadband needs of residents, businesses, schools, seasonal visitors and others within the community. The Town's goal is to provide a broadband network capable of providing robust broadband services with sufficient upstream speeds to support emerging applications that require symmetrical speeds typically not supported on copper facilities. A community survey was conducted in 2020 to explore the satisfaction levels with existing ISP's and their services within Fort Fairfield. Survey results show that although 95% of the Town of Fort Fairfield has access to some form of Internet service, 50% of subscribers have access to only one ISP and 50% of respondents stated the service did not meet their needs. The primary reasons listed were that the service was too slow and too expensive.

The Town is soliciting proposals for the enhancement and expansion of broadband facilities and services by existing providers who are already providing services in the Town and/or through new providers interested in design, construction and implementation of new broadband facilities throughout, or in portion(s) of, the Town. This network infrastructure must be affordable, reliable, minimum 20-year life and offer best service levels available. The Town will entertain proposals from individual Vendors or Vendor teams in response to any or all of the components of this RFP.

The Town has defined within this solicitation the performance standards desired. The Town is interested in a collaboration which provides exceptional customer service to its residents, businesses and seasonal population. All technology solutions proposed must be permissible under the zoning, land use and other ordinances of the Town of Fort Fairfield.

The Town is committed to exploring various technology and operational models that would achieve the desired outcome. All qualified Vendors are invited to propose innovative solutions to achieve the Town's desired outcomes. Each proposal must provide the detail necessary for the Town to readily evaluate such proposal and to determine whether and how each proposal will satisfy the Town's expected outcomes in whole or in part.

Many factors need to be considered in developing a Town-Wide broadband plan, to include ownership models, capital expenses, operational expenses, financial feasibility, end user take rates, variations in end user costs, outside plant facilities, rights of way, central office facilities, electronics, etc. A determination of long-term success will be the utilization of the network as well as applications supported on the network and how those applications and services help to shape Fort Fairfield's future.



The broadband network is expected to be capable of providing 1Gbps symmetrical access throughout the community. The Town of Fort Fairfield has a total of 96 road miles throughout its community. The network will provide access to approximately 1,820 single family residences and apartment buildings. There are a total of 498 businesses ranging from farms and home businesses to brick-and-mortar buildings downtown. The Town desires a full fiber optic network throughout the community. The design should provide options for 1Gbps symmetrical access speeds with a path to 10Gbps series in the future.

The Town is committed to maintaining an objective perspective on the technologies and operational models to be considered for achieving its desired outcomes. All qualified vendors are invited to propose innovative solutions to achieve the Town's desired outcomes and request that all proposals provide the detail necessary for a fair evaluation of alternative proposals and determine whether and how each proposed solution will satisfy the Town's expected outcomes.



## **2. Statement of Purpose**

- 2.1 The Town of Fort Fairfield, Maine is issuing this Request for Proposal (RFP).
- 2.2 The Town is soliciting proposals on the design, buildout, and operation of a fiber-based broadband network throughout the community. The Town of Fort Fairfield has a total of 96 road miles throughout its community. The network will provide access to approximately 1,820 single family residences and apartment buildings. There are a total of 498 businesses ranging from farms and home businesses to brick-and-mortar buildings downtown. The Town desires a full fiber optic network throughout the community. The design must provide options for 1Gbps symmetrical access speeds with a path to 10Gbps services in the future.
- 2.3 Mission Broadband is an independent telecommunications consulting firm retained by the Town of Fort Fairfield to manage the RFP process for the Town-Wide Broadband Project. Mission Broadband will collaborate with the Town of Fort Fairfield throughout the RFP process and will provide consultative support to the Town as necessary.
- 2.4 The Town also seeks responses on the deployment and management of access and transport electronics of the network. The Town will seek the services of a qualified respondent to operate the network. The components requiring responses are detailed in sections 8 through 13 and are as follows:
  - 2.4.1 Town-Wide Broadband Access Network: Outside Plant Design and Implementation – RFP Section 8.
  - 2.4.2 Town-Wide Broadband Access Network: Access and Aggregation Electronics Design and Implementation – RFP Section 9.
  - 2.4.3 Internet Connectivity and Transport – RFP Section 10.
  - 2.4.4 Central Office or Colocation Facility with Access to Service Providers – Section 11.
  - 2.4.5 Service Providers – RFP Section 12.
  - 2.4.6 Network Operator: a qualified operator to manage and operate the network – RFP Section 13.

## **3. Project Correspondence and Questions**

- 3.1 All project correspondence and questions shall be by email to:

RFP Administrator  
Mission Broadband  
Suite 4  
145 Exchange Street  
Bangor, ME 04401  
Email: [missionbroadband@missionbroadband.com](mailto:missionbroadband@missionbroadband.com)

It is the Vendor's responsibility to confirm the RFP Administrator's timely receipt of such correspondence.



#### 4. RFP Process Timetable and Proposal Submission Requirements

##### 4.1 RFP Process Timetable

Milestone	Target Date
RFP Posted	August 9, 2021
All Written Questions Submitted	August 27, 2021, 5:00 pm
Responses to All Questions Posted	September 3, 2021 12:00 pm
Proposals Due by 3:45 PM Eastern	September 17, 2021
Town Council Meeting / Award Date	October 20, 2021
Special Town Council Meeting for Financing of the Town-Wide Broadband Project	October 27, 2021
Municipal Vote on Broadband Project	November 2, 2021

##### 4.2 Proposal Submission Requirements

- 4.2.1 An electronic copy shall be emailed to the RFP Administrator, Mission Broadband at [missionbroadband@missionbroadband.com](mailto:missionbroadband@missionbroadband.com) and received by 3:45 PM Eastern time on the Proposal Due Date noted in the Timetable above.

##### 4.3 Proposal Addendums and Q&A

- 4.3.1 Vendors should submit any questions, noted errors, discrepancies, ambiguities, exceptions, or deficiencies they have concerning this RFP by emailing such requests, with “Town of Fort Fairfield RFP Inquiry” in the subject line, to RFP Administrator, Mission Broadband at [missionbroadband@missionbroadband.com](mailto:missionbroadband@missionbroadband.com).
- 4.3.2 The Town will post any addendums to this RFP, as well as any question received and any response thereto, on the Town’s website at <https://fortfairfield.org/rfp-bid-proposals.html>  
For clarity of response, the Town may restate or combine questions received from multiple Vendors.
- 4.3.3 Vendors shall include all addenda in their responses, and all instructions in Section 5 that apply to the issued RFP also apply to any/all addendums.

#### 5. Instructions to Vendors

- 5.1 Any and all information provided to vendors by the Town of Fort Fairfield is considered to be proprietary information and must be used solely for the purpose of preparing the proposal and is not to be released outside the Vendor organization without written permission from the Town.



- 5.2 All proposals submitted shall be valid for six months or until a contract is signed, whichever comes first.
- 5.3 The Town understands vendors do not need to respond to each section of the RFP. A Vendor can team with another vendor and/or respond to some or all of the RFP. No advantage will be assessed for a proposal that addresses all RFP components, and conversely, no disadvantage will be assessed for a proposal which does not address all RFP components.
- 5.4 Vendors shall use the numbering convention in this RFP when formatting their response. The Vendor response shall be explained in detail and shall indicate how the Vendor proposes to satisfy each requirement, where necessary. At the very least, the Vendor must indicate compliance, non-compliance, understood or exception for each line item.
- 5.5 Vendors shall cite specific terms and conditions to which they take exception. The Vendor shall state the exact requirement to which exception is taken. Any cost impact associated with an exception shall be identified and included in the proposal.
- 5.6 All proposals shall provide a straightforward, concise delineation of the Vendor's understanding of and capabilities to satisfy the requirements of this RFP. Emphasis should be on completeness and clarity of content.
- 5.7 As the selection process progresses, vendors may be asked to provide professional references from similar projects, including contact name, mailing address, phone number, email address, and description of the projects.
- 5.8 Vendor shall describe any experience serving municipal broadband networks.
- 5.9 As a separate document, but included in the RFP response submittal, the Town requests an Executive Summary that summarizes the Vendor's approach to a prospective partnership with the Town for this project.
- By responding, the Vendor states that the Proposal is not made in connection with any competing Vendor submitting a separate response to the RFP and is, in all aspects, fair and without collusion or fraud.
- 5.10 The Town reserves the right to seek clarification of each Proposal or to make an award without further discussion of the Proposals received. Therefore, it is important that each Proposal be organized and submitted in a clear and complete manner.
- 5.11 Vendors may use the accompanying file titled *Town of Fort Fairfield RFP Pricing Matrix.xls* that is referenced in Exhibit B.1 for the pricing of their proposed solutions. Using this matrix is preferred but not mandatory. The tabs on the spreadsheet are named to match the RFP sections requiring proposals.
- 5.12 The Vendor shall clearly outline warranty information and annual maintenance costs for all components included in the solutions they propose.
- 5.13 This RFP document is the property of the Town of Fort Fairfield and shall not be reproduced or used without permission of the Town of Fort Fairfield.



- 5.14 All materials submitted in response to the RFP become the property of the Town. If there is any concern about confidentiality, mark the appropriate pages of your response “Confidential.”
- 5.15 No contract will be awarded except to responsible vendors deemed by the Town to be capable of performing the work requested. Vendor's employees shall be trained and qualified to perform the work and operate all required equipment. Before the award of the Contract, any Vendor may be required to show that they have the necessary facilities, experience, personnel, ability, and financial resources to perform the work in a satisfactory and timely manner.
- 5.16 The Successful Vendor may be required to post a 100% Performance and Payment Bond.

## **6. Authorized Negotiator**

- 6.1 The proposal shall be signed by the person authorized to legally bind the proposal.
- 6.2 The proposal shall designate the Vendor’s authorized negotiator, who shall be empowered to make binding commitments.

## **7. Insurance**

- 7.1 Each Vendor selected by the Town shall comply with all rules, regulations, ordinances, codes, and laws relating to its work or the conduct thereof and shall secure and pay for any permits and licenses necessary for the execution of its work.
- 7.2 Each Vendor selected by the Town shall be responsible for implementing precautions for the safety and security of, and shall provide reasonable protection to prevent damage, injury or loss to Vendor’s employees, any subcontractor’s employees, Town personnel, and the general public. Each Vendor shall comply with all applicable safety regulations including Dig Safe, traffic safety laws, OSHA, and regulations of the Town of Fort Fairfield. Each Vendor shall comply with and give notices required by applicable laws, statutes, ordinances, codes, rules, and regulations, and lawful orders of public authorities bearing on safety of persons or property or their protection from damage, injury or loss
- 7.3 A certificate of insurance **is not** required as part of the proposal submission. The following will be required of winning vendor(s).
  - 7.3.1 General Liability Insurance: \$1,000,000 per occurrence; \$2,000,000 in the aggregate.
    - 7.3.1.1 Premises/Operations
    - 7.3.1.2 Products/Completed Operations
    - 7.3.1.3 Contractual
    - 7.3.1.4 Personal Injury
    - 7.3.1.5 Bodily Injury / Property Damage
  - 7.3.2 Automobile Liability: \$1,000,000 per occurrence; \$2,000,000 in the aggregate.





- 7.3.3 Professional Liability Insurance: \$1,000,000 per occurrence; \$2,000,000 in the aggregate.
- 7.3.4 If the above insurance is written on a claim made form, it shall continue for three years following termination of this agreement. The insurance shall have a retroactive date of placement prior to or coinciding with the effective date of this agreement.
- 7.3.5 The Town of Fort Fairfield must be named as additionally insured on the COI.
- 7.4 Workers Compensation and Employers' Liability – per Maine Statute
- 7.5 Each Vendor selected by the Town further agrees to require its subcontractor(s), if any, to maintain General Liability Insurance, Worker's Compensation and Employer's Liability Insurance, where applicable. The amounts of such coverage shall be as reasonably determined by such Vendor selected by the Town.

## **8. Town-Wide Broadband Access Network – Outside Plant Design and Implementation**

- 8.1 The Town is seeking proposals for the design and construction of a Town-Wide fiber-to-the-premise network with sufficient capacity to provide options for 1Gbps symmetrical internet service to approximately 1,820 single family residences and apartment buildings. There is a total of 498 business within the community that range from farms and home businesses to brick-and-mortar buildings downtown.
- 8.2 The Town is not predisposed to a particular optical access technology and will consider all solutions that meet the requirements laid out in this RFP. The design must provide options for 1Gbps symmetrical access speeds with options for 10Gbps access speeds in the future.
- 8.3 The Town desires the network to be constructed with additional capacity beyond the infrastructure required to provide broadband services to subscribers. There are several identified applications for this additional capacity as follows:
  - 8.3.1 Connectivity to existing or future municipal locations.
  - 8.3.2 New residential and commercial subdivisions.
  - 8.3.3 Future smart town and municipal IOT applications.
  - 8.3.4 The sale of dark fiber and wholesale services.
- 8.4 Vendors proposing any fiber optic outside plant, design, and implementation must adhere to the requirements below.
  - 8.4.1 All fibers will be single mode.
  - 8.4.2 Vendor must provide a high-level explanation of the OSP requirements for this project and explain any powered field equipment required to provide the solution proposed.
  - 8.4.3 Vendor must provide all required Outside Plant (OSP) materials, Fiber Distribution Panels (FDP) and Racks to accommodate implementation



- of the physical network and termination of fiber within a Central Office or Head End facility.
- 8.4.4 Fiber cable must be installed per manufacturer's specifications.
  - 8.4.5 Fiber drops will be terminated into Network Interface Devices (NIDs) on the outside of residential structures. Electronics may be placed inside or outside depending on Vendor and customer preference.
  - 8.4.6 Fiber drops will be a combination of aerial and buried.
  - 8.4.7 Where aerial drops exist, Vendors may use aerial solutions. Where existing utilities are underground, drops must be buried.
  - 8.4.8 For buried drops, conduit such as microduct is required.
  - 8.4.9 The preferred desired overall drop length is 750 feet or less. Vendors are encouraged to propose designs and solutions they feel meet and/or exceed industry standards. All solutions will be considered. Vendor will need to engineer drops accordingly to structure, (i.e., residential, business, multi-dwelling, condominium, etc.
  - 8.4.10 Vendors proposing fiber will install slack loops in sufficient quantity to ensure all current and future service needs can be met. Explain your standard practice and distance for placing slack loops.
- 8.5 The Successful network construction Vendor will be responsible for the preparation of all necessary pole attachment licensing applications for this project.
  - 8.6 All Vendors must provide to Town the industry standards that they will adhere to for installation of all network components such as Fiber Optic Association Standards (FOAS).
  - 8.7 Successful Vendor(s) will secure permits and approvals and finalize construction details with the Town's support as needed.
  - 8.8 Successful Vendor(s) will be required to deliver engineering maps and as-builts of final network including documents detailing all poles, drops, slack loops, splice and termination points in paper and digital formats as determined by the Town.
  - 8.9 Optical Time Domain Reflectometer (OTDR) acceptance testing for all fibers shall be completed after fiber installation and industry standard acceptance results will be provided for the Town to review and approve.
  - 8.10 Vendor pricing may be provided by filling out the pricing matrix titled *Town of Fort Fairfield RFP Pricing Matrix.xls* referenced in Exhibit B.1 or optionally use their own pricing format.



## **9. Town-Wide Broadband Access Network – Access and Aggregation Electronics Design and Implementation**

- 9.1 The Town is requesting design and implementation of the hardware and electronics necessary to provide options for 1Gbps symmetrical internet access to approximately 1,820 single family residences and apartment buildings. There are 498 business within the community that range from farms and home businesses to brick-and-mortar buildings downtown.
- 9.2 The design must provide 1Gbps symmetrical access speed options with a path to 10Gbps services in the future.
- 9.3 The diagram in Exhibit A.1 illustrates an example of GPON network deployment architecture. The diagram in Exhibit A.2 illustrates the applications that may run over the end-to-end network. The diagram in Exhibit A.3 illustrates the standard deployment of fiber to a residential premise. Vendors are encouraged to propose designs they feel optimally meet the requirements and specifications of this RFP.
- 9.4 The core network must provide scalability and flexibility to adapt to changing bandwidth and application needs over time. The desired characteristics of the network are as follows:
- 9.4.1 The network must scale to meet short term and long-term traffic demands. It is expected that the enablement of high-speed broadband throughout the Town will result in an increase in bandwidth intensive applications such as telecommuting, telehealth, gaming, streaming video, video conferencing, and distance learning. IoT applications will be important as well. The network must have sufficient capacity and scalability to meet increasing consumption habits.
  - 9.4.2 Vendor must ensure that high availability, redundancy, and hot swappable common components (i.e., control cards/processors, power supplies, etc.) are built into the core electronic components.
  - 9.4.3 The network must be flexible enough to provide different types and classes of services to meet different customer and Service Provider requirements.
  - 9.4.4 The core and access platform solutions must be capable of logically segmenting traffic to/from different Service Providers via separate VLANs, VPNs or some other mechanism.
- (Note: If the vendor does not want to participate in an open access network, please describe reasoning and desire for a closed network.)
- 9.4.5 Vendors proposing solutions based on Gigabit Passive Optical Network (GPON) technology must explain any backplane or uplink bandwidth constraints as take rates increase and individual PON ports become oversubscribed.



- 9.4.6 Fiber-to-the-premise solutions must be capable of supporting access utilizing a single strand of fiber except where dual strands are required for a specific application or customer.
- 9.4.7 Support for IEEE 802.3ad/802.1AX link aggregation on all uplink ports.
- 9.4.8 Support for IEEE 802.1Q VLANs throughout entire network.
- 9.4.9 Support for IEEE 802.1p QoS (minimum four traffic classes) throughout entire network.
- 9.4.10 SNMP management capabilities throughout entire network.
- 9.5 Network Termination Equipment (NTE) on customer premise.
  - 9.5.1 NTE is defined as the electronic devices that are installed at the customer premise, either inside or outside of the structure.
  - 9.5.2 NTE shall include model options of 10/100/1000 Base TX ports facing subscribers.
  - 9.5.3 NTE shall include single port and multi-port model options for different types of uses (i.e., single unit, multi-unit).
  - 9.5.4 Vendor will need to engineer NTE according to the type of structure, (i.e., single unit, multi-unit, hotel, etc.).
  - 9.5.5 It is required that Vendors provide NTE options capable of supporting Wi-Fi for customer use inside the premise.
  - 9.5.6 Vendors should explain compelling advantages and features of their solution beyond the baseline listed above.
- 9.6 Vendor pricing may be provided by filling out the pricing matrix titled *Town of Fort Fairfield RFP Pricing Matrix.xls* referenced in Exhibit B.1 or optionally use their own pricing format.

## **10. Internet Connectivity and Transport**

- 10.1 For Vendors proposing new construction of broadband facilities, it is assumed that the core electronics used for direct connectivity to the internet will be housed in the Central Office that will be constructed; however, the Town is open to other solutions.
- 10.2 For Vendors proposing to expand existing broadband facilities within the Town, please explain the architecture that will support the expanded services that will be provided within the Town.
- 10.3 Explain your solution for transporting bandwidth to and from the Town network.
  - 10.3.1 Please explain the physical route of the fiber connection that will provide Internet service to the Town.



- 10.3.2 Please explain the upstream capacity that will be delivered to support the network. Please explain the redundancy and scalability of the upstream architecture.
- 10.4 Vendor pricing may be provided by filling out the pricing matrix titled *Town of Fort Fairfield RFP Pricing Matrix.xls* referenced in Exhibit B.1 or optionally use their own pricing format.

## **11. Central Office or Head End Facility**

- 11.1 The Town requires rack space in a Central Office or Head End Facility within the municipal boundaries of the town. This space will be used for all of the head end and access electronics required to operate the network. This location and equipment will be used to provide transport of bandwidth to and from the Internet and access to Service Providers who will provide services in the community. The Central Office or Colocation facility shall have the following characteristics:
  - 11.1.1 Facility shall run in a High Availability (HA) configuration, with fully redundant power and cooling.
  - 11.1.2 Facility shall include uninterruptible power source (UPS) batteries, and backup power generation for survival through sustained commercial power outages.
  - 11.1.3 Facility shall have strong physical security, with limited/controlled access.
  - 11.1.4 Facility shall have environmental controls for humidity and temperature, and fire suppression systems.
  - 11.1.5 Equipment shall be mounted securely in racks and cabinets, in compliance with national, state, and local codes. All equipment shall be connected with uninterrupted cutover to battery and generator.
- 11.2 Vendor pricing may be provided by filling out the pricing matrix titled *Town of Fort Fairfield RFP Pricing Matrix.xls* referenced in Exhibit B.1 or optionally use their own pricing format.

## **12. Service Providers**

- 12.1 Town is requesting Service Providers to provide services to subscribers in the community. The Town seeks vendors who will provide a superior customer experience for the Town's diverse population and needs.
- 12.2 Service Provider must have a strong track record of providing outstanding customer service and support and any vendor chosen by the Town shall provide the following items to demonstrate this track record. (Note: as the selection process progresses,



vendors may be asked to provide the following information but this information is not required with the initial proposal):

- 12.2.1 Three customer references.
  - 12.2.2 Summary of organizational programs or initiatives aimed at improving the customer experience.
  - 12.2.3 Annual Key Performance Indicator (KPI) goals and achievements for Customer Service and Technical Support for the past three years.
- 12.3 The Town is requesting Service Providers to provide the following services:
- 12.3.1 Internet Bandwidth. Vendor pricing may be provided by filling out the pricing matrix titled *Town of Fort Fairfield RFP Pricing Matrix.xls* referenced in Exhibit B.1 or optionally use their own pricing format.
- 12.4 The Town plans to negotiate final Service Level Agreement (SLA) requirements with the winning Vendor(s). Please explain your approach to SLA guarantees for residential and commercial subscribers.
- 12.5 Service Provider vendors must perform the following functions: (Question for Town on their involvement with the following:)
- 12.5.1 Sales and marketing activity to sell services to subscribers.
  - 12.5.2 Billing, collection, and payment of all monthly recurring charges to include Federal and State taxes, surcharges, and assessments.
  - 12.5.3 Standard Customer Service functions.
  - 12.5.4 Technical Support Level I / II / III: Vendor must have a Network Operations Center (NOC) or Technical Support call center to take calls from subscribers with service and repair issues.
- 12.6 Vendor pricing may be provided by filling out the pricing matrix titled *Town of Fort Fairfield RFP Pricing Matrix.xls* referenced in Exhibit B.3 or optionally use their own pricing format.

### **13. Network Operator**

- 13.1 The Town is seeking proposals from qualified operators for the operation, management, and maintenance of the broadband network that will be constructed in the town. The network is intended to be an open access network allowing Service Providers, who wish to provide services over the network to do so provided they meet Town requirements, including performance and customer service standards. The operator must have experience working with and managing relationships with multiple Service Providers. The Town desires subscribers to have an excellent customer service experience. (Note: If the vendor does not want to participate in



an open access network, please describe reasoning and their desire for a closed solely run/operated network.)

- 13.2 The Town recognizes that Vendors may be unable to respond solely to this section of the RFP due to the unknown architecture of the final network. The Town understands that qualified Vendors who wish to respond solely to this section will be required to partner with other Vendors for the network architecture to be defined. In the event that the Town does not receive the desired responses for this section, it is possible solicitation of these services may occur through a future RFP process.
- 13.3 The primary functions that will need to be performed are listed below. It is assumed that the winning vendor will have existing Operation Support Systems/Business Support Systems in place and strong experience turning up, onboarding, and managing greenfield networks.
- 13.4 The Town requires ongoing configuration, management, and maintenance of the physical network as well as the electronics supporting the network access platform. Please explain any functions listed above/below that would be outsourced.
- 13.5 Operator must have a strong track record of providing outstanding customer service and support and the winning Vendor shall provide the following items to demonstrate this track record: (Note: as the selection process progresses, vendors may be asked to provide the following information but this is not required for the initial responses.)
  - 13.5.1 Three customer references.
  - 13.5.2 Summary of organizational programs or initiatives aimed at improving the customer experience.
  - 13.5.3 Annual Key Performance Indicator (KPI) goals and achievements for Customer Service and Technical Support for the past three years.
- 13.6 Physical Plant
  - 13.6.1 The Town requires a contractor to provide ongoing maintenance of any physical plant (aerial and underground) including backbone segments, laterals, drops, field cabinets, and all other associated OSP hardware in the network. It is the Town's desire that the network be repaired quickly. A Service Level Agreement (SLA) will be negotiated with the Successful Vendor upon selection.
- 13.7 Electronics
  - 13.7.1 The Town requires a contractor to provide ongoing operation and maintenance of the broadband network including all access and aggregation electronics.
  - 13.7.2 Operate, manage and monitor the network on a 24x7 basis.





- 13.7.3 Vendor will make all network monitoring data and statistics available to the Town either through reporting or portal access.
- 13.8 Vendor must have trouble escalation procedures in place.
- 13.9 Vendor pricing may be provided by filling out the pricing matrix titled *Town of Fort Fairfield RFP Pricing Matrix.xls* referenced in Exhibit B.1 or optionally use their own pricing format.

## **14. Evaluation and Selection Criteria**

- 14.1 The Town seeks a Town-Wide robust, scalable, and future proofed broadband network. There are several components requiring proposals in this RFP and the Town will select the most appropriate vendor for each component. Each Vendor is encouraged to provide detailed responses to demonstrate its experience and expertise in providing services as requested in this RFP. The selection will be based on all factors listed for each component and may not go to the lowest price proposal if price is outweighed by a combination of other features and factors in the Successful Vendor's proposal.
- 14.2 The Town reserves the right to select proposals that in its sole judgment most nearly conform to the specifications set forth herein, best serve the needs of the Town of Fort Fairfield and provide the most cost-effective means of producing those results.
- 14.3 The Town is not obligated to accept or select any proposal received in response to this RFP. In particular, the Town may select proposals in whole or in part, or it may disqualify any and all proposals received.
- 14.4 The Town will use selection criteria that includes the following for each section of the RFP: Vendor Viability, Technical Merit, Implementation Timeline and Cost. The selection decisions made by the Town under this RFP are final.
  - 14.4.1 In evaluating Vendor Viability, the Town will score vendors based on the following criteria:
    - 14.4.1.1 The Vendor's previous experience with complex projects of a similar size, scope, and characteristics and/or their experience with the element(s) of the project for which they are providing proposal(s).
    - 14.4.1.2 Documentation from the Vendor that demonstrates the Vendor's experience with similar projects (or element thereof) of the same size and scope.
    - 14.4.1.3 Any other information that bears on the Vendor's suitability for this project.
  - 14.4.2 Technical Merit of Proposal scores will be assigned based on how well the proposed solution meets the currently understood and projected needs of the Town. This may





include, among other things, service performance characteristics (SLA terms), technology description, continuity of network platform, diversity and redundancy in the Service Provider's network, diversity from existing services, transport technology, reliability, technical support capabilities, scalability, expandability, future network capabilities, and the appropriateness of the design proposal for the Town and how well it meets the stated priorities of the network.

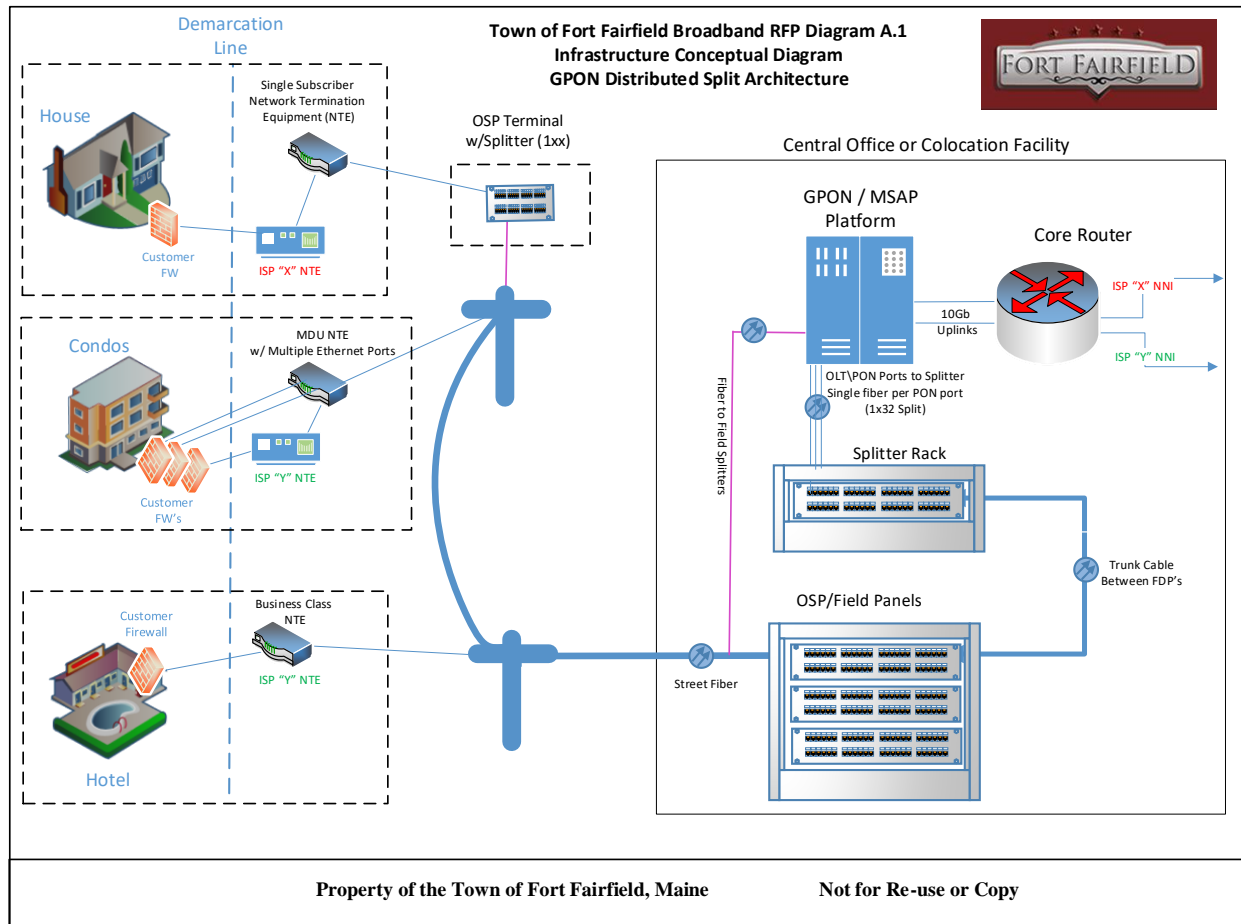
- 14.4.3 In evaluating the Implementation Timeline, the Town will consider, among other things, the projected starting date, the overall time to install, the disruption of existing services, the complexity of the installation and the projected completion date as well as the reasons for these projections. If appropriate, a starting date relative to completion of a prior milestone may be used.
- 14.4.4 Costs may include, among other things, monthly recurring costs, non-recurring costs, fees, the termination liability associated with existing contractual obligations, and any additional costs that the Town may potentially realize based on any given Vendor selection. All costs that can reasonably be anticipated over the desired 20-year lifecycle should be addressed. Note: The Town of Fort Fairfield is tax exempt.

## **15. Rejection/Negotiation Rights**

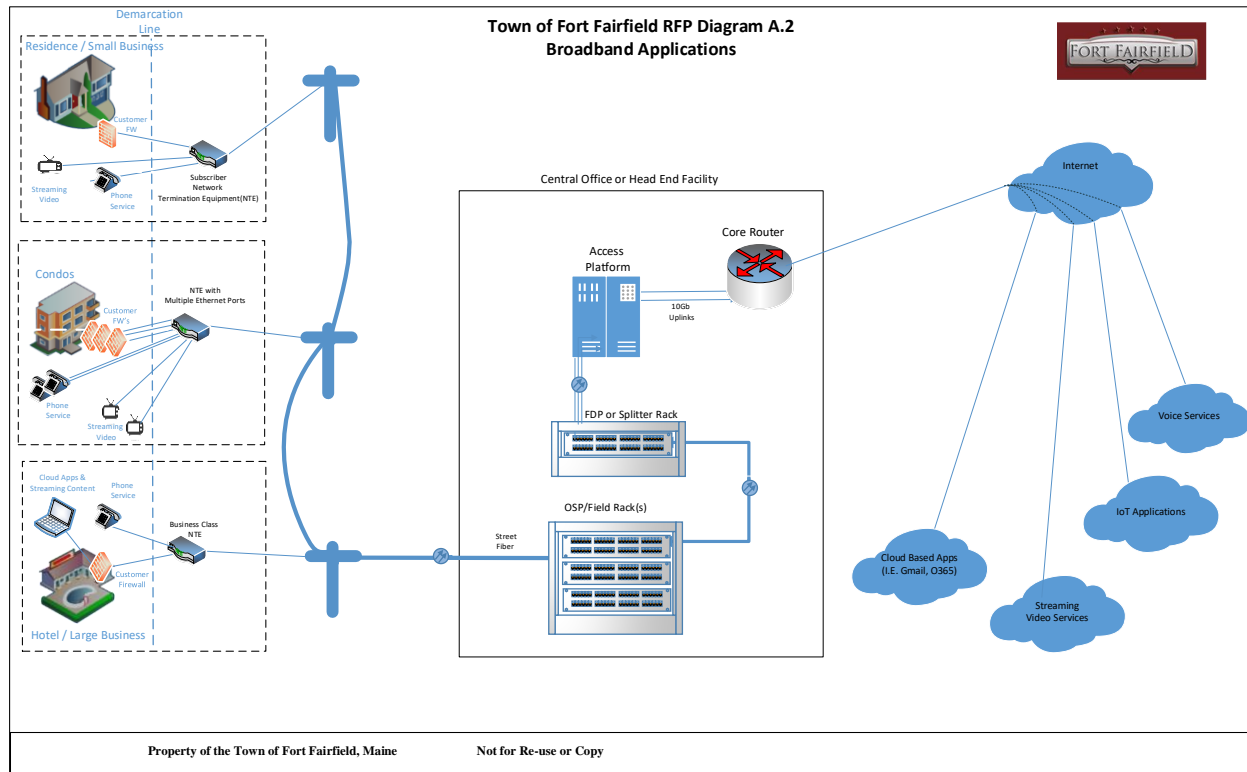
- 13.1 The Town reserves the right to disqualify any proposals for substantial non-compliance with the terms of this RFP. The Town reserves the right to accept or negotiate the contractual terms of any proposal(s) in response to this RFP.
- 13.2 The Town reserves the right to select multiple Service Providers.
- 13.3 The Town reserves the right to select multiple equipment providers.



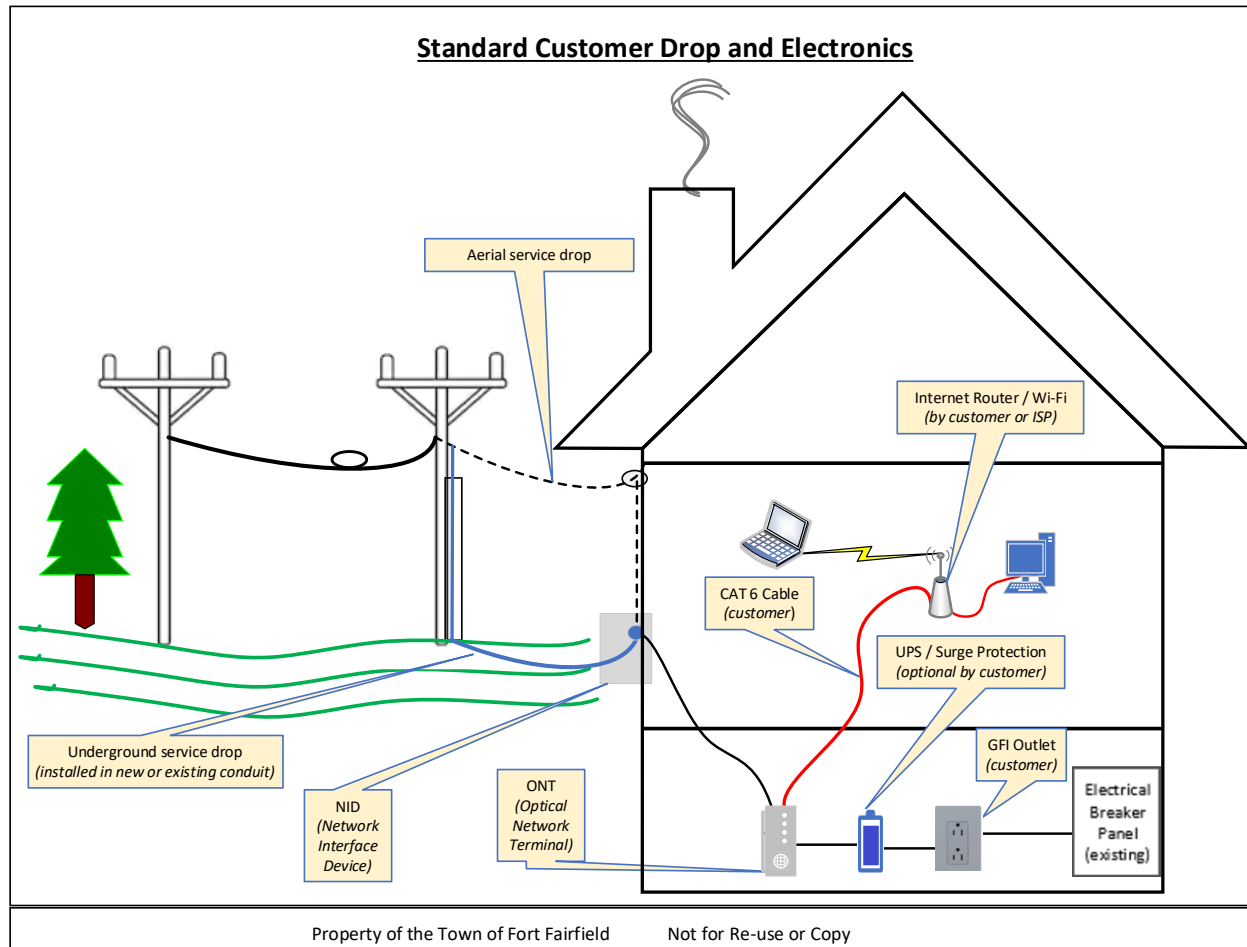
## Exhibit A.1: Example Broadband Architecture



## Exhibit A.2: Examples of Network Applications



### Exhibit A.3: Example of FTTP Standard Drop Configuration



## Exhibit B: List and Description of Associated RFP Documents

### **B.1:** Town of Fort Fairfield RFP Pricing Matrix.xls

This file is an Excel spreadsheet to be used by Vendor's in pricing out their solutions. There is a corresponding tab for each section of the RFP with instructions for pricing out the proposed solution. Use of this Pricing Matrix is preferred but not mandatory.

