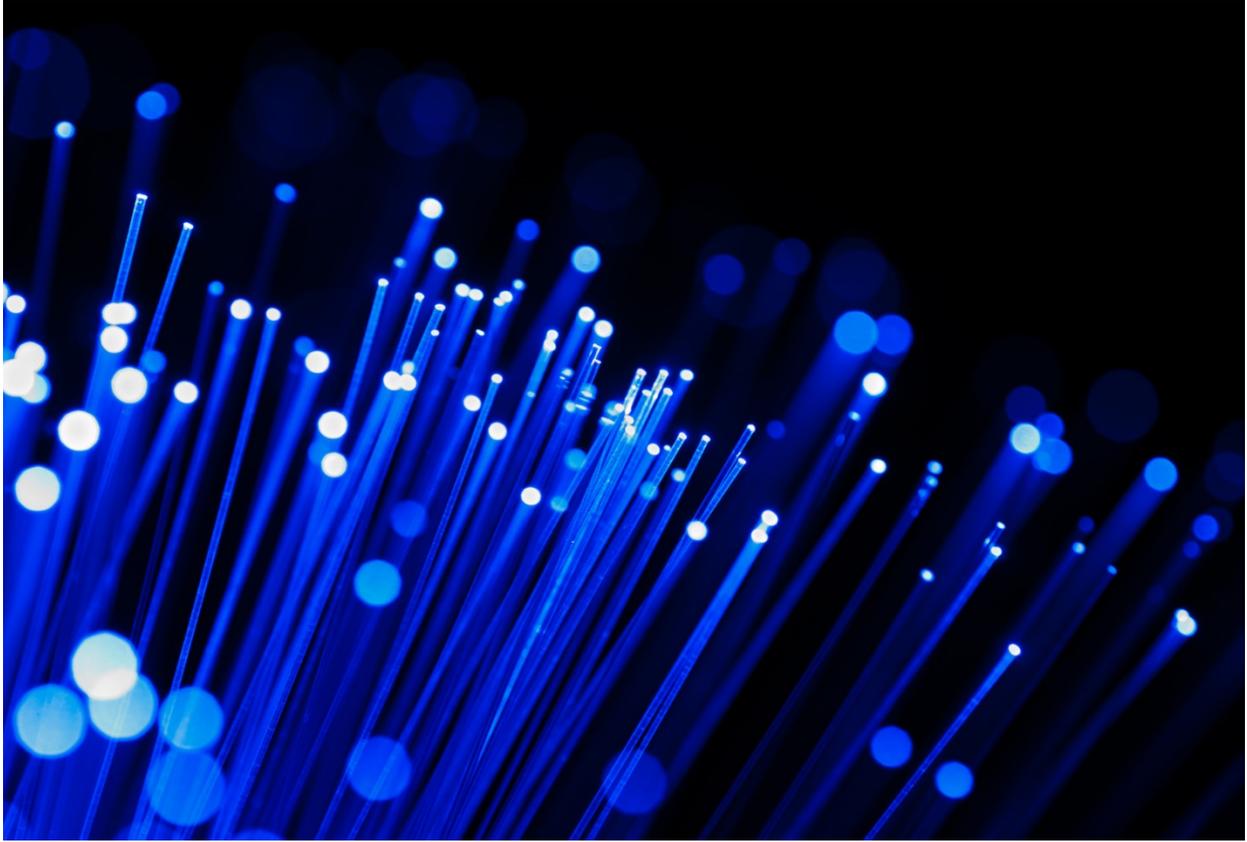


Request for Proposals

Dakota Broadband Board



Systems Plan Update and Business Analysis

October 2020

Dakota Broadband Board
430 Third Street
Farmington, MN 55024

Overview of Request

The Dakota Broadband Board is seeking responses/quotes from vendors to update the existing Systems Plan for its broadband fiber network, and to conduct a business analysis of the current broadband environment in Dakota County. Dakota County (MN) is a part of the seven county Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, and its communities range from urban and suburban in the northern portion of the county to its rural towns and townships in the southern half. The outcome of the project is expected to inform future operational and policy decisions of the Dakota Broadband Board regarding the use of its broadband fiber network.

Dakota Broadband Board: Background

The Dakota Broadband Board (DBB) is a Joint Powers Organization created in December 2017 between Dakota County, the Dakota County Community Development Agency (CDA) and the following 10 communities in Dakota County:

Apple Valley	Burnsville	Farmington	Hastings	Inver Grove Heights	Lakeville
Mendota Heights	Rosemount	South St Paul	West St Paul		

As stated in the existing Joint Powers Agreement, the intent of the DBB is:

- To create a high-performance institutional network (I-Net) for the efficient management of physical network assets owned among members (conduit, fiber, etc.), and to enable more efficient and lower cost price agreements for members for a variety of IP-based services
- To utilize excess I-Net capacity to enhance business attraction, business retention, and economic development opportunities through the provision of whole access to private sector providers (C-Net)

The DBB currently manages over 197 miles of broadband fiber for its members (Exhibit A). It is important to note that the DBB will not be a retail provider of services to businesses and residents in Dakota County.

Organizational Structure

The DBB is governed by a Board that consists of one elected official from each member entity. In addition to the Board, the DBB maintains two additional committees to provide guidance and oversight of its actions. The Technical Advisory Committee is comprised of one staff representative from each member who provides insight on technical/operational decisions and activities. An Executive Committee, whose membership includes the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board, and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Technical Advisory Committee, and the Executive Director, provides a key connection between policy and technical decisions.

In addition to the existing board and committee structure, daily operations are managed by an Executive Director who also oversees a variety of vendors for network operations and maintenance, as well as fiscal and legal services.

Requested Scope and Deliverables

The DBB is specifically seeking the following deliverables from this project:

- A. Update of the December 2017 *C-Net/I-Net Systems and Business Plan* that was created by Design Nine (Copies available on the DBB website at: <http://www.DBBMN.gov>)
- B. Stakeholder and Community Input
 - a. Understanding of the existing availability and satisfaction level of broadband services for Dakota County stakeholders including:
 - i. Residents (Single family and multi-tenant properties)
 - ii. Employers (Large, Medium, and Small)
 - iii. Healthcare providers
 - iv. K-12 and Higher Education
 - v. Local government and non-profit organizations
 - vi. Private Sector ISPs (Existing service areas and challenges)
 - b. Due to the impacts of COVID-19, the DBB is particularly interested in specific feedback from residents/businesses working from home and distance learning
- C. Identification of Opportunities for I-Net Expansion
 - a. Evaluation of the existing DBB fiber network capacity and the identification of future routes/projects to benefit member communities and strengthen the network
- D. Economic Development Opportunities and Community Value
 - a. Identification of strategic steps DBB members can take to further expand economic development opportunities throughout Dakota County
 - b. Examples from other communities who have successfully utilized broadband infrastructure and public/private partnerships to attract and retain businesses
- E. Models, Structures and Pricing Options for Use of the Network Fiber by Non-Members (C-Net)
 - a. Development of a market analysis for the options available to the DBB to lease excess fiber to non-members, including an acknowledgement of the impact that potential policy decisions by the DBB Board (i.e. availability in unserved/underserved areas of Dakota County only) would have on feasibility including short and long-term viability
 - i. Options, pricing, and recommendations for dark fiber leasing/use
 - ii. Options, pricing, and recommendations for lit fiber leasing/use
 - b. Identification of options/approaches for future public/private partnerships to meet community broadband needs
- F. Outreach and Communications Strategy
 - a. Development of an ongoing communications/outreach strategy that promotes organizational transparency, efficiency, collaboration

Project Budget

The DBB has allocated up to \$40,000 for this analysis. Responses received in excess of this amount will not be considered at this time.

General Information and Vendor Selection

All responses should include the identification of at least three public sector references, preferably from a similar kind of community broadband analysis. Please clearly define all pricing and costs associated with the response, as well as the expected timeline for completion of the project.

The evaluation of responses will include review by the DBB Technical Advisory Committee, DBB Executive Committee, and the DBB Board. The DBB Board will select a vendor at its regular meeting in December 2020. Evaluation criteria will include the following:

1. Ability to address and respond to the items defined in the project scope/deliverables
2. Experience with a similar analysis for public sector entities, particularly in local government
3. Experience of lead and support staff assigned to the project
4. Price

Responses should be submitted to the DBB at the email/address below. Any responses received after 5pm on November 20, 2020 will not be considered.

Please send responses to:

Carah Koch
DBB Executive Director

Via Email: ckoch@farmingtonmn.gov

Via Mail: 430 Third Street, Farmington MN 55024

Exhibit A: DBB Member Fiber September 2020

